

Planning Social Services for Urban Needs

PAPERS ON COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION PRESENTED AT
THE 84TH ANNUAL FORUM OF THE
NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL WELFARE

PUBLISHED FOR THE
NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL WELFARE
BY COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS NEW YORK 1957

Copyright © 1957, National Conference on Social Welfare, Columbus, Ohio
Published by Columbia University Press, New York

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 56-465

PUBLISHED IN GREAT BRITAIN, CANADA, INDIA, AND PAKISTAN
BY THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON, TORONTO, BOMBAY, AND KARACHI

MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



Foreword

SIGNIFICANT TO PROGRESS in community organization for social welfare are the increasing contributions to its literature. The publication this year of a separate volume of community organization papers is tangible evidence of this fact. It is encouraging that community organization subject material is appearing with increasing frequency in the Annual Forum program of the National Conference on Social Welfare, and an ever-growing number of speakers are submitting papers for review.

Choice is necessarily inevitable. This may mean eliminating a good paper from publication in this volume. It is the objective of the Selection Committee to choose on the basis of excellence of quality of the individual papers and variety in subject matter among the selections. The titles of the eleven papers here included testify to the latter point. In the best judgment of the Committee each of these contributions is well presented and adds substantially to our literature.

From her experience in community organization practice and in teaching, Violet Sieder has gained insight into the specifics of the community organization job. She transmits this understanding to her audience in this latest addition to her substantial list of published documents.

The phenomenon of "metropolitanism" and its impact upon social welfare are well illustrated in papers by Isadore Seeman and Jack Stumpf. A good companion document for the reader interested in the growing problems of metropolitan areas is Sydney Markey's paper emphasizing social work's contribution in urban renewal.

Three papers are concerned with problems and services involving children and youth. Harrison Dobbs presents a stimulating and comprehensive dissertation on a subject of universal concern—juvenile delinquency. An orderly approach to better organization

of child welfare services is developed by Fred DelliQuadri. The brief story told by Lillian Robbins suggests a successful neighborhood approach to meeting problems of young people.

Fees for providing services and cost of administering them are common threads that run through the remaining subjects. Community fee policy, a matter of growing interest, is dealt with in a forthright manner by Blanche Bernstein. Elwood Denton's question "What Is a Social Worker Worth?" is compelling enough to be required reading for both lay and professional. The papers on cost data by Ralph Ormsby and Lois Wildy are included both for their effective treatment of difficult and still relatively new experiences and because of the importance of this subject to social welfare financing and planning.

C. F. McNEIL

Philadelphia, Pa.

August 1, 1957

Contents

FOREWORD	iii
THE CONTRIBUTORS	vi
THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION WORKER <i>Violet M. Sieder</i>	3
THE ORGANIZATION OF SOCIAL SERVICES FOR A METROPOLITAN AREA <i>Isadore Seeman</i>	17
WORK WITH GROUPS IN RAPIDLY GROWING SUBURBAN COM- MUNITIES <i>Jack Stumpf</i>	28
A PARTNERSHIP IN URBAN RENEWAL <i>Sydney B. Markey</i>	43
NEIGHBORHOODS RALLY TO HELP YOUTH <i>Lillian D. Robbins</i>	49
NEW WAYS OF LOOKING AT COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION FOR CHILD WELFARE <i>Fred DelliQuadri</i>	56
TIME TO STOP SHADOWBOXING IN OUR JUVENILE DELINQUENCY FIGHT <i>Harrison Allen Dobbs</i>	65
A SENSIBLE APPROACH TO A COMMUNITY FEE POLICY <i>Blanche Bernstein</i>	82
WHAT IS A SOCIAL WORKER WORTH? <i>Elwood V. Denton</i>	92
ADMINISTRATIVE USE OF COST DATA	
I. COST ANALYSIS IN THE FAMILY SERVICE FIELD <i>Ralph Ormsby</i>	102
II. COST ANALYSIS IN CHILD PLACEMENT AGENCIES <i>Lois Wildy</i>	112

The Contributors

BLANCHE BERNSTEIN, Director of Research, Community Council of Greater New York

FRED DELLIQUADRI, Director, Division for Children and Youth, Wisconsin Department of Public Welfare, Madison

ELWOOD V. DENTON, Assistant Cashier, Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland; member, Case Work Council, Welfare Federation of Cleveland; board member, Family Service Association of Cleveland

HARRISON ALLEN DOBBS, Professor of Social Welfare, School of Social Welfare, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge

SYDNEY B. MARKEY, Philadelphia County District, Health and Welfare Council

RALPH ORMSBY, Executive Director, Family Service of Philadelphia

LILLIAN D. ROBBINS, Executive Director, Lenox Hill Neighborhood Association, New York

ISADORE SEEMAN, Executive Director, United Community Services of Washington, D.C.

VIOLET M. SIEDER, Professor of Social Work, New York School of Social Work, Columbia University, New York

JACK STUMPF, Consultant, Education-Recreation Division, Health and Welfare Council, Philadelphia

LOIS WILDY, Executive Director, Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society, Chicago

*Planning Social Services
for Urban Needs*

The Tasks of the Community Organization Worker

by *VIOLET M. SIEDER*

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION HAS BEEN rather generally accepted as one of the three basic methods of social work practice, along with casework and group work. It is also usually conceded that of the three methods, community organization has the least well-formulated concepts of process, knowledge, and skills required for professional practice. Although these concepts have not been enunciated in such a way as to gain formal or general acceptance, I believe that there is a common body of knowledge and skills both in the literature and in general use by social workers which only awaits documentation and systematic testing.

Inasmuch as community organization, as social work practice, has a rich background of experience to draw upon; and since in my capacity as practitioner, consultant, and teacher, I have observed widely and have analyzed this experience, I shall present a systematized, descriptive statement of the tasks performed in current community organization practice.

Obviously, any conceptualization which is to be acceptable for curriculum building must check with the experience of the practitioners. This effort is made in the hope and expectation that it will be viewed as a "working paper" to be challenged, modified, or discarded—and that at least it may serve as a stimulus to the setting forth of a body of theory which we may use as a platform.

No attempt will be made here to define "community" or to expound philosophy or to trace the relationship of other social work methods to that used by the community organization practitioner.

(1)

(4)

(19)

(25)

4 *The Tasks of the Community Organization Worker*

I shall take as my point of departure the paper I gave at the 1956 National Conference of Social Work.¹

33 The social worker engaged in the practice of community organization draws upon the basic philosophy, principles, and ethics of his profession, and both uses and contributes to the methodology which forms the generic core of social work. Fundamental to all social work practice is the concept of helping or enabling the client—whether individual, group, or community—to identify problems and needs, to formulate a plan for meeting these needs, to accept the plan and to implement it through appropriate action. This activity is premised on a respect for the inherent rights and responsibilities of people in a democracy to determine their own course of action and to share in directing their own destiny. These decisions are reached through the interaction of individuals and autonomous groups, and their wisdom will depend on knowledge, mutual understanding and respect for difference, and a statesmanlike willingness to relinquish personal or group gains on behalf of the larger community.

In community organization programs, this activity depends upon both the quality of indigenous leadership of the autonomous groups within the community and the skill of professional community organization leadership which is free to work objectively with all groups. Aside from the idealism reflected in this approach to helping people, there is abundant evidence to show that it also is realistic in terms of pragmatic tests. Change and progress are achieved and maintained best when people affected are involved in the decision-making process.

9 The concept of change in order to achieve growth and development is fundamental to all methods of social work practice. Community organization in social work is concerned: (1) with solving problems of or involving intergroup and interorganizational relationships which affect the welfare of the community; and (2) with providing a network of interrelated and integrated services for the prevention and treatment of social ills. The practice of community organization involves the use of methods which will

¹ Violet M. Sieder, "What Is Community Organization Practice in Social Work?" in *The Social Welfare Forum, 1956* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), pp. 160-74.

effect change in the behavior of organizations and institutions of the community through which problems are created and/or services are rendered or determined. Institutions, by their very nature, have vested interests in their own programs, structures, and attitudes, and change in one organization may start a chain reaction of acceptance or resistance in other interrelated bodies. It follows that improving, innovating, combining, or eliminating a service is often an extremely painful and difficult task. To work with organizations in the community organization process is essentially to work with the people who are their leaders and representatives. These leaders, in turn, influence the members who ultimately control policies and program. People fundamentally resist change unless strongly motivated by an awareness of gains to themselves, the organizations with which they are identified, or the larger community within which they, their families, and their organizations exist. It follows that the broad task of the community organization worker is to work with the community through its constituent parts, individually and collectively, so as to help it identify its problems, and motivate it toward change. This is done by bringing to bear professional knowledge, skills, and the art of practice, of which timing is a major factor.

The literature of community organization, for the most part, defines it as a "process" in which the community is engaged, but unlike casework and group work, there is no accepted definition of community organization as a social work method. Since the "process" of organizational interaction resulting in modification of institutional behavior takes place as a natural dynamic reaction of community life, such definitions do not clarify the role of the professional community organization worker. This is comparable to defining the process of interpersonal interaction within the family or the group as a natural phenomenon without indicating the social worker's role in the use of methods which facilitate a healthy development in these relationships. (39)

For example, a family in difficulty can resolve its problems of tense relationships by breaking up the home; or a group can find harmony by excluding members or gain satisfaction by engaging in antisocial behavior. By the same token, a community may at- (16)

6 *The Tasks of the Community Organization Worker*

tempt to resolve its problem of juvenile delinquency by establishing a playground or by passing a curfew law. When a social worker undertakes to help these clients with these same problems, the result can be expected to be a more socially desirable and effective solution. In each instance the social worker plays the role of assisting the client to understand the realities and nature of the problem, and on the basis of professional diagnosis and use of knowledge and skills, to help movement from problem situation to appropriate and desirable goals.

Recognizing then, that a "process" of community organization takes place in a community under any circumstance, let me attempt to define community organization as a method of social work practice which affects that process consciously and positively as a professional service.

Community organization is a method of social work practice which helps a community determine and achieve continuously more desirable program goals which meet constantly changing social welfare needs by facilitating the interaction of its constituent parts (organizations, institutions, individual leaders, and geographical subdivisions) in such a way as to release and make maximum use of its internal and external resources while at the same time strengthening its potential ability to undertake the solution of new and more difficult problems. Its focus is upon developing cooperative and collaborative attitudes among individuals and groups and increasing their capacity and motivation to work together to bring about progressive change and better integration in the social services of the community. This is achieved by helping the community to identify needs, rank these needs, formulate a plan to meet them, implement the plan of action, and assess this action in terms of its adequacy and consequences. This method is based in social work philosophy, principles, and ethics, and depends on knowledge of the social structure and dynamics of a community social welfare program content, the science of human relations, and the art of professional practice.

In using the community organization method the worker makes conscious and disciplined use of himself in interpersonal, group, and intergroup relations, through the appropriate choice and use

of such skills as the interview, consultation, conference, committee, and delegate groups, and with the support of such administrative tools as fact-finding, interpretation and public relations, budgeting, financing, and administration.

To take a meaningful look at the tasks performed by the community organization worker, we must view them against a conception of the totality of the community organization process within which the tasks operate and to which they relate. This conception, by the very nature of community organization practice, must be multidimensional and therefore complex. I shall outline it in steps.²

1. *Assessment of the reality factors in the community situation.*—This involves two approaches: first, an awareness of what elements in the situation have been identified, recognized, and understood by which leaders or representatives of what organized community interests. This implies an assessment of community knowledge, degree of interest, and negative or positive attitudes for the purpose of establishing a base line of problem definition from which the community organization is prepared to move toward some solution. Evidence of community concern with problems may be ascertained through intergroup situations, such as delegate assemblies, forums, or committees, or through relationships to specific organizations or leaders.

The second approach is a professional assessment of the situation made in the light of the worker's knowledge about socioeconomic, cultural, organizational, political, religious, and other factors affecting potential group interaction and integration; and his knowledge about social work programs and goals appropriate to the problems uncovered. The results of the community assessment and the professional assessment may be quite different. The first may control the immediate goal; the second, help in developing steps to a long-range goal.

2. *Diagnosis of the community situation.*—Before moving into an action program, a careful diagnosis of the reality factors must be undertaken. This involves problem identification, interorgani-

² A chart, "Community Organization and Structure," may be obtained from the author, at the New York School of Social Work.

(13)

(43)

8 *The Tasks of the Community Organization Worker*

zational relationships analysis, and an evaluation of individual leadership potential.

In classifying problems it is important to identify them both in terms of relative urgency and of the probable length of time required to achieve a solution. A tentative outline of steps from problem to goal should be developed as a test of the feasibility of solution and the measure of community readiness. This is especially important in determining the project or committee load which can be effectively handled by the community organization worker, and hence affects the intake policies of the organization for which he works.

An interorganizational relationship analysis is dependent upon:

- (1) ascertaining the service functions of public and voluntary welfare organizations which have a bearing upon the problem situation; (2) assessing the positive or negative interests of various citizen organizations—civic, religious, fraternal, professional, business, labor, political, and so on; (3) determining any special interests or biases within geographical subdivisions of the community; (4) understanding the function of various coordinating structures to which these organizations relate, both vertically and horizontally; and (5) evaluating these various programs and interests in relation to the community power structure.

In addition to problem identification and organizational analysis there is need for an evaluation of individual leadership potential. This includes: (1) identifying persons (professional and lay) with special knowledge and skills in the problem or program areas under consideration; (2) identifying the direct and indirect leaders in the community and assessing their influence and power in relation to prestige, economic, social, political, and other factors; and (3) evaluating the potential of these leaders as participants or leaders in the democratic process of community interaction.

3. *Formulation of the community's social goals or objectives.*—

There is need to develop a suitable organizational structure or structures through which representatives of community interests may work together with the help of the community organization worker. This involves a plan to provide for legislative and policy-

making bodies, staff, budget, and other administrative considerations. A major purpose of this structure is to facilitate intergroup communication and interaction in formulating and carrying out commonly agreed-upon goals and objectives. It also provides organizational authority and controls for the role of the community organization worker.

At the stage of formulation of goals, the community organization worker: (1) facilitates the bringing together of representatives of appropriate groups and individuals for study, evaluation, and formulation of a plan; (2) stimulates and helps maintain communication between organizational representatives and the groups they represent during the process of developing a plan; and (3) broadens the circle of communication for information and reaction to such developing plans, to other interested groups and individuals (*a*) in various related planes of activity (national, state, metropolitan area, neighborhood, international), and (*b*) in related functions (city planning, board of education, public officials, and so forth).

In this crucial stage of community organization process, the community organization worker brings to bear on the formulation of community goals his special expertise in professional skills. A primary skill is that of working with committees. He assists in their formation and operation, not only in terms of selection of members and such administrative procedures as developing an appropriate charge, clarifying lines of authority; arranging for minutes and reports, making appropriate physical arrangements for meetings; but also by facilitating the group process through the professional use of himself in his relationship to the chairman and the individual members of the committee. His role as professional secretary to a committee includes not only facilitating productive interaction during meetings through assisting the chairman in clarification of questions or issues, supplying information, relieving tension, but also through activities outside, and between, meetings. These would include: gathering essential facts and helping the committee develop appropriate methods of study and research; securing consultant advice and help from appropriate resource people both within and outside the community on sub-

stantive content areas; and helping to delineate the problem and plan for solution through sensitivity to the need for timely interpersonal relationships with individuals influential because of their particular knowledge, skills, prestige, or power, and their potential effect on the development or retardation of plans. These interpersonal relationships may take the form of:

a) An interview to ascertain the point of view, substantive facts, or other pertinent information necessary to committee deliberation

b) Getting consultation from an expert in an area of special skill (research or public relations) or on substantive matters, or on organizational problems

c) Giving consultation to a chairman, leader, or participant who seeks advice or guidance on procedural matters, professional content, or relationship problems

d) A conference, formal or informal, with groups in a position to give or use special help with a community organization problem, including their own interrelationships

e) A negotiation to resolve a conflict between persons or groups holding opposing points of view which impede progress within the community organization process.

It should be noted that the community organization worker may use the skills of interview, consultation, conference, or negotiation alone or in combination to assess the problem before a committee is appointed. In some situations involving a limited number of organizations a problem may be resolved on short contact through a conference or two; or an organization may only seek and need consultation in regard to its handling of a community or agency problem. Although much of a community organization worker's time is given to work with committees, undoubtedly a greater percentage of staff time is spent in other activities.

The implementation of a plan usually involves policy decisions. The formulation of any social policy needs to be reported for purposes of reaction, modification, or endorsement to the representatives of the organizations engaged in the community organization process. The delegate assembly which serves as a forum

and/or action and legislative body is the usual community organization device for this intergroup activity. The community organization worker has some special tasks to carry out in this connection which include: (1) preparation of informational materials for advance deliberation by the delegates and their organizations; (2) definition of issues or questions to be discussed; (3) preparation of a report of the meeting and its actions; (4) follow-up with organization representatives on their reporting back to their groups and from these groups to the intergroup; (5) development of next steps toward a plan for implementation of the action in cooperation with responsible administrative leaders and organizational subdivisions; (6) publicity before and after the delegate meeting. In short, the community organization worker uses his professional skills to assure open, active, and meaningful channels of communication between the central planning body and its related organizations.

4. *Implementation of the plan to achieve the goal.*—Although I have designated this as a separate step, the implementation of the plan is in large part inherent within the process engaged in by the community representatives and the community organization worker in defining the action objective.

As has been noted, the best guarantee for securing change is to assure genuine involvement of those whom it will affect in the process of problem identification and formulation of the plan. There are, however, some specific tasks to be undertaken by the community organization worker to implement the goal.

A bridge between formulation of plan and implementation is the use of public relations and interpretation skills. This involves preparing reports, releases, speeches, and using appropriate media to dramatize the situation and to sell the plan. Strategic timing of special meetings, conferences, or institutes and securing a spot on the program of other organizations holding conferences or meetings is an important device.

If the program objective requires legislative action, the community organization worker has responsibility for assuring that specialized legal and other necessary expert skill is mobilized to prepare, analyze, and submit drafts of bills through appropriate

channels. The art of timing combined with detailed and thoughtful advanced planning on strategy is essential to this task. A concomitant community organization function is the mobilization of community forces back of the desired action. This usually involves operating toward time-limited targets and coordinating the separate activities of many groups so as to achieve the greatest impact. The choice of the specific skills used by the community organization worker will depend on the degree of unanimity and the emergent nature of the situation.

Whether the plan to be implemented affects public or voluntary agencies, there is bound to be a problem of financing. Presentation of the facts to budget hearings and appropriating bodies requires special skill in preparation of materials and selection of spokesmen.

It is important for the community organization worker to understand the community tax structure and its relationship to Federal, state, and local tax-supported programs. Knowledge of federated financing under sectarian and nonsectarian auspices and the relationship of these financing structures to each other and the community planning organizations is essential. This requires establishing a good working relationship with all related appropriating bodies through their staff and lay leadership.

The establishment of a new service inevitably calls for an evaluation of its worth in relation to other existing programs. The budgeting and financing functions call for skill in ranking services on a priority basis in relation to resources and needs. The task of the worker is to help the community develop policy and criteria which they can apply to specific programs in relation to the substantive facts and their own value judgments.

In the actual implementation of a plan, there may be need to modify it in order to gain necessary support. The community organization worker must be skillful in negotiation and compromise so as to protect essential features of the proposed program and not jeopardize long-range goals.

5. *Reassessment of community situation and setting new goals.*
—In community organization process, no achieved objective may

be considered a final goal. In tackling one problem others are frequently uncovered; and new knowledge of treatment methods or changing community values call for a constant reassessment of existing services. The community organization worker must establish such devices as central reporting of services and unmet needs to assure community awareness and sensitivity to developing trends. Here he brings to bear special knowledge and skill in fact-finding and statistics. He must be sensitive to the interrelatedness of services both within and outside the welfare organizations. This he achieves through formal and informal relationships to these organizations.

At this point our process in community organization has come full circle, and we find the worker back at the task of "assessing the reality factors in the situation" as a first step toward developing new goals. Actually, the situation for the community organization worker is not that neat. He will be involved in a number of projects, each in different stages of development at any given time. To complicate matters still further, they will involve a number of separate fields of service and content areas. Obviously, the worker needs skill in moving each of these plans toward its goal and at the same time keeping them related and integrated within the broad framework of the welfare planning organization.

It follows that the community organization worker must bring to his task not only learned knowledge and skills, but special personal aptitudes which briefly may be characterized as: imagination and social vision; initiative and resourcefulness; an ability to work with all kinds of people without regard to economic, social, racial, religious, or status factors; organizational ability, including capacity to carry a variety of simultaneous assignments and to meet commitments promptly; intellectual alertness necessary to identify the core of an issue, to analyze data and facts, and to anticipate conflict situations; intellectual and professional integrity which permits compromise on substantive matters without compromising on basic principles, and an ability to maintain confidence in organizational and individual relationships; leadership qualities which are constructive in developing leadership in others

as well as in exerting active influence in community deliberations; and the personality to attract the liking, respect, and confidence of lay leaders and professional social workers.

A unique aspect of community organization practice in social work is the role of the volunteer who is at once the client, the service volunteer, and the final administrative authority. This calls for a clear understanding of the role of the professional in relation to the volunteer, and a clear conception of the different relationships called for on the part of the social worker as he works with volunteers carrying these different roles. The use of supervisory, consultant, direct, and indirect leadership techniques is involved here. A basic skill in working with laymen is an ability to interpret professional concepts in understandable, usable language and at all times to avoid professional jargon.

Another unique condition of community organization work is the possibility of building upon a continuity of relationships over a long period of years with organizations within the community. Unlike casework and group work, where there is shifting in the cases or groups served, in community organization the community as a unit remains the same focus of attention over the years. To be sure, the problems and goals change, and the character and variety of organizations may change, but there remains a core of identity built upon history, tradition, and experience which may either limit or strengthen the ability of the worker to help effect necessary change. It is for this same reason that the maximum effectiveness of a community organization worker in a given community is reached only after a two- or three-year experience, the time depending on the community's size and complexity. This time might be shortened if community organization workers developed adequate systems of recording which would inform and initiate incoming staff.

A third factor is the multidimensional character of the relationship of the worker to people who participate in the community organization process. Not only must he understand and relate to them as individuals in terms of his knowledge about personality, cultural background, and other factors affecting their behavior, and so forth, but also as representatives of groups. This latter re-

quires knowledge about the organizational policy, program, and biases as well as characteristics of the behavior of the group in its relationship to other groups; and the extent to which the organization is being fairly represented by the individual. Although the focus of the relationship is not a therapeutic one, it does frequently require handling personality problems and helping the individual or the group to grow and develop in the process of working on community objectives. The importance of providing people with a satisfying experience as effective members of the community is more and more recognized as basic to mental health both for the individual and the community.

A review of the tasks required of the worker in the community organization process would seem to indicate clearly that they call for a high degree of professional knowledge, skill, maturity, energy, and ability. Although based in the generic concepts of social work, I believe that community organization is a separate and unique method of social work practice.

There are some who will question the validity of this statement. Their doubts may be traced in part to confusions resulting from the historical development and emphasis in recent years in which social work practice has become equated with casework in the minds of many people.³ More recently, group work has achieved professional status as an accepted method of practice. Both methods have the advantage of engaging in face-to-face contacts with individuals who are identifiable as the direct beneficiaries of the service. On the other hand, there has been an unfortunate tendency for some social workers to think of community organization as an action technique through which the worker does things to the community, such as neating-up the community service pattern by clarifying agency functions and relationships. This is sometimes conceived as primarily an administrative operation which implies a scientific analysis of the community by the professional expert who then skillfully manipulates the situation to bring about the ends he has determined are good for the community. In my opinion, this confusion is heightened when the practitioner is referred to as the "community or-

³ Marion K. Sanders, "Social Work: a Profession Chasing Its Tail," *Harper's Magazine*, March 1957, pp. 56-62.

16 *The Tasks of the Community Organization Worker*
ganizer" instead of the "community organization worker" or
"community worker."

Clearly, this is not the task or method of the professional community organization practitioner. He neither sees the intergroup process as an end in itself nor considers goals as desirable regardless of the means to the end. Rather he uses his methods to forward the process of community organization by consciously using himself to help the community determine, achieve, and extend services toward those social goals which it finds desirable. Community organization as a method of social work practice is a direct and necessary service to the community.

The Organization of Social Services for a Metropolitan Area

by ISADORE SEEMAN

HOW CLOSE ARE THE SOCIAL SERVICES of a metropolitan community to the people whom they are designed to serve? If we compare the way in which the services are generally organized with the pattern of how the people congregate for living, yet travel distances to their work, we must conclude that the services have not caught up with the people. If we examine the extent to which agencies select the people they will serve, we must conclude that the services are not very close to the people.

It seems to me the most important consideration in examining a desirable pattern for social services in a central city and its suburbs is the question of availability. Are the services where the people can use them? Is there an agency where the people want it? Will the agency let in the people who want its services? We shall need to examine the eligibility structure of the agencies of the community, both as to the nature of the service they will let people receive and the characteristics of the people they are willing to serve. A special consideration must obviously be the criteria with respect to residence requirements. A second consideration which will influence the availability of a service is the quantity which can be rendered—a problem with special implications in a suburban area.

Closely related is the degree of flexibility with which the agency can serve its clients. Special attention must be given to this factor in the structuring of agencies in a large city and its smaller neighboring suburbs.

Finally, we should give some thought to the difficult question

of the quality of services since this may be affected by the organization of the agency.

With these thoughts as a background, let us examine the way in which social services are organized in the National Capital area.¹ As you know, the District of Columbia was originally a joint gift to the United States of the State of Maryland and the Commonwealth of Virginia. The District was exactly ten miles on each side, tilted in such a way as to resemble an almost perfect baseball diamond. Through procedures which still have the lawyers puzzling, Virginia somehow got back its share, so that the District of Columbia, the central core of the National Capital area, now retains its straight boundaries on the west, north, and east, but is bordered on the south by the Potomac River. South across the river, in what was once a part of the District of Columbia, are the independent city of Alexandria and Arlington County; surrounding both of these and stretching over a large area is Fairfax County, with the independent city of Falls Church located within its borders. The other borders of the District of Columbia to the west, north, and east lead into two counties in Maryland—Montgomery and Prince Georges. The National Capital area, then, is made up of six major political units: Montgomery and Prince Georges counties in Maryland; the city of Alexandria and Arlington and Fairfax counties in Virginia; and the District of Columbia.

The population of the metropolitan area is just under 2 million persons. Eight hundred and fifty-five thousand people live in the District of Columbia, and over a million live in the surrounding suburbs. As recently as 1950, more than 800,000 people lived in the District, but the suburban communities of Maryland and Virginia housed fewer than 700,000. In 1940, there were less than half as many people in suburban Washington as there were in the city itself. The pace of peripheral growth is astounding.

But residence is only one consideration in planning services for people. Nearly half of all the people in any community leave

¹ You will note how carefully I use the phrase "National Capital area" and no other to describe the community in which I am employed. It is not accurate to speak of "Metropolitan Washington"; for we have reached the point, which other metropolitan communities are also beginning to reach, where the number of people living in the suburbs now exceeds the number living in the central city.

their homes at least five days every week to travel to work. In any metropolitan area, and certainly in the National Capital area with its large Federal establishment, many of these people leave the political jurisdiction in which they reside to reach their place of employment. This is shown quite dramatically by the fact that Prince Georges County is the home of 105,000 people who are employed somewhere or other, but within the geographic boundaries of Prince Georges County only 62,000 people find their place of work. Similarly, nearly 34,000 people who live in Prince Georges County work for the Federal Government, but only 17,000 people who work for the Federal Government do so within Prince Georges County.

The reverse of this situation is seen in the District of Columbia where so many of the Government buildings are located. While 400,000 people who reside in the District of Columbia work somewhere or other, 500,000 people find their place of employment within the borders of the District. One other community in the National Capital area compares with the District in this respect, and that is the community in which the Pentagon is located, in Arlington County. While 42,000 people who live in Arlington County work for the Federal Government, there are 55,000 people in Federal employment in buildings physically located in Arlington County. Arithmetically, this would mean that if every one of the 42,000 people who live in Arlington and work for the Federal Government were actually employed in the Pentagon, there would be an additional 13,000 people driving into Arlington County every morning. Obviously, it is not that simple. I am sure we would find that some of the 42,000 who live in Arlington County and are on the Federal payroll travel out of Arlington County, across the Potomac River, through the District of Columbia, to the Naval Ordnance Laboratory located in Montgomery County.

What about the social services in the National Capital area? I examined in detail the directory of health, welfare, and recreation agencies we published in 1956. This is a listing of all public and voluntary nonprofit agencies serving the area. I excluded from my tabulation such agencies as boards of education, workmen's com-

(47) pensation commissions, unemployment compensation boards, and the like. There are, and I think this figure in itself is significant, 230 separate independent agencies serving some of the people in some part or all of the area. The wording of this statement must be quite deliberate. It is not correct to say that there are 230 agencies serving the National Capital area. As a matter of fact, only one of every four of these agencies is organized in such a way that it is willing to serve any resident of the area. In contrast to this are 60 percent of the agencies whose service is available only to residents of the political jurisdiction in which the agency is located. Ten percent of the agencies make their service available to residents of more than one political unit, but not to the whole area. It is interesting to note that, although the number of those agencies which serve more than one political unit is small, nearly twice as many represent a service that cuts across the boundary lines of two suburban communities as is true for agencies which will serve the central city plus a suburb. What forces are at work when an agency board makes a decision of this kind on the area it will serve?

There are 141 agencies which make up the 60 percent which limit their service to one community only. Fifty-seven of these are located in the central city and 84 are located in the suburbs. Thus could one classify the ratio of provincialism as 60-40 in favor of the suburbs.

It is interesting to note that the number of separate agencies in each of the five suburban communities is not far from equal—14, 15, 17, 18, and 20. These are the agencies serving only their own community. This compares with the 57 in the District of Columbia serving only District residents. As would be expected, nearly all of the 60 agencies which serve the entire National Capital area have their headquarters located in the central city.

In an effort to find what might lie behind this statistical picture or might throw some light on its implications I sent a brief questionnaire to each of these 230 agencies. My report is based on a 37 percent response, or a tabulation from 86 agencies. I was interested in how many agencies operate with a single office and how many have branches. Seventy-eight percent of the agencies

which responded attempt to reach their clients out of a single office. I asked each agency whether or not it was officially connected or unofficially associated with any other agency in the National Capital area. Nearly one half of those who responded reported neither kind of relationship with any other agency.

I inquired whether the agencies were giving serious consideration to changes in their structure with respect to area served, that is, whether they were planning to move toward a more regional service or toward a more local service. Twelve percent indicated they were planning some change, nearly all of them looking toward serving the larger region or a state-wide service. I invited those who responded to the questionnaire to express their own opinion on the degree to which their present administrative arrangement seemed to meet the need for their type of service, that is, whether they felt a more local or a more metropolitan approach would be better. Seventeen percent of those who filled out the general questionnaire expressed no opinion on this point. Of those who did respond, 57 percent were satisfied with their present arrangement. Twenty percent said they would prefer a more metropolitan approach; 10 percent expressed a preference for a more local approach; and 10 percent indicated they would like both to move toward a more metropolitan service and yet to reach the local communities better. Though I did not test for statistical significance, I was interested to note that of those agencies serving the residents of only their own political jurisdiction, 66 percent were satisfied with their present service, as compared with only 47 percent in the case of agencies serving more than their own locality. Might it be that the broader our horizon is, the more restless we are?

The tabulation by field of service and agency auspice shows some interesting results. Although there are 60 agencies whose service is available to the entire area, not one is a public tax-supported agency.² One public agency—a state vocational rehabilitation agency—did indicate a service to more than one county. All the voluntary institutions and all the voluntary hospitals which

² Obviously, I did not include such a direct Federal program as Old Age and Survivors Insurance, which serves the entire nation.

responded to the questionnaire indicated a service to the entire National Capital area. In contrast, one half of the recreation agencies and one half of the welfare agencies serve only the residents of their own area. Even more marked is the fact that 75 percent of the health agencies render service only to the people of their local community.

It seems to me there is significance in the age of these agencies since it may well reflect the degree of maturity. Is it not highly significant that of those agencies responding to the questionnaire more than one half have been operating for less than twenty years? These are certainly young agencies which have much to learn and far to grow. Of those agencies which were created within the last twenty years, nearly 80 percent serve only one county or city, and most of these agencies serve one local suburban community only. By contrast, of the twelve agencies which reported their establishment prior to 1900, ten serve the entire National Capital area or even a greater territory.

The final factor on which the agencies responded was finance. Seven percent of the agencies reported that their total annual expenditure was less than \$10,000. Significantly, all of these agencies serve only their local community. Nearly one third of all the agencies indicated that their total annual budget was under \$25,000, and three out of four of these serve only their own local community. Just over one half of the agencies spend less than \$50,000 a year, and again three out of four of these serve only their political area. Of those agencies which spend \$100,000 or more, 80 percent have a service area broader than the local community.

Let me give you now specific illustrations of how some of the major services are arranged with respect to geographic coverage. I leave it to you to judge the extent to which scientific population studies or sound logical reasoning entered into the decisions on service territory.

Voluntary nonsectarian family service is offered in each of the six political communities in the National Capital area. Four of the six have entirely independent agencies, but two of the northern Virginia counties are served by a single agency. Services to

Catholic families are provided in all three northern Virginia communities by one agency; there is a separate agency in the District of Columbia and a separate but partially related agency in Prince Georges County, with no Catholic charities in Montgomery County. Family service for the Jewish population is offered for the entire National Capital area by a single agency. There is, of course, a separate public welfare department in each of the six political jurisdictions.

In the field of recreation, a single Boy Scout council serves not only all of the National Capital area, but considerably beyond. To get girl scouting to the people, there is a separate council in each of four jurisdictions, with the District of Columbia and Montgomery being served by a single council. The YMCA is a single metropolitan organization with seven branches located throughout the area. In contrast, there are two independent YWCA's in the suburbs and two independently chartered YWCA's within the city. The Salvation Army is a single agency serving the entire National Capital area. The Boys' Club in Alexandria is separate from the Boys' Club in Prince Georges County and from the Boys' Club of Washington, although the Washington Club has organized a club in Montgomery County.

In the voluntary health field, each of the well-known national organizations has a separate and independent unit in each of the communities. There is, of course, a separate health department in each jurisdiction. There are four voluntary visiting nurse agencies in the area, each separate and each serving a local community, except that the District Visiting Nurse Association has now begun to serve one of the communities in Maryland which has no service of its own; the other Maryland county is still without a voluntary visiting nurse program.

There is one service which is available in all six communities, but which in all six is at the moment entirely independent, one of the other. This service, ironically enough, is that of community planning. Definite steps are now under way with the goal of bringing together these independent planning operations.⁸

⁸ Since this paper was written, the Health and Welfare Council of the National Capital Area has been established to unite the independent community planning and budgeting services of the formerly separate corporations.

What can we draw out of this confusing mass of figures and out of some reflections on experience in seeking to serve better the people who live in our metropolitan communities? This is a problem of considerable magnitude since more than 60 percent of the total population of the United States now reside in 174 metropolitan areas. The first national conference on metropolitan problems was convened in 1956. Hardly any governmental group or professional organization meets today but what the problem of suburbia is high on the agenda.

I offer for our common thinking, a series of "musts":

1. *Eligibility.*—We must realize that the question of eligibility is a truly critical one. We must give a new interpretation to "eligibility" and discard many of our present restrictions. The first one we should eliminate is political community of residence.

Here are extracts from the eligibility statements of some of our agencies:

Nonsectarian home for white women over sixty years of age who have no means of support. Must be residents of D.C. five years prior to application for admission.

Nonsectarian home for indigent and aged white widows of Georgetown.

Provides shoes without cost or at a minimum fee for persons certified as indigent by local welfare agencies.

A cancer detection center for Montgomery County residents.

Pays for eye, ear, and dental care for medically indigent school children of Fairfax County.

Home for elderly destitute homeless people who are not bedridden.

5 Our agencies are organized separately to serve the foster child and the homeless child, the retarded child and the emotionally disturbed child, the convalescent child and the defective child, the child of the working mother. We have a separate agency to serve the incorrigible and the uneducable. We screen out the tax eligible, the public housing eligible, the medically indigent. We distinguish between the totally and permanently disabled, the vocationally rehabilitable and the veteran with service-connected

disabilities. And then we add the question, "Where do they legally live?"

There are, though they are all too few, agencies whose eligibility standards are in tune with the times. Let me quote some:

Adoption service; territory served: within a radius of fifty miles of Washington.

Residential treatment and education for emotionally disturbed children; territory served: the area within commuting distance of the agency.

Maternity home care; territory served: no restrictions.

I repeat, we must give serious attention to the elimination of restrictions on eligibility and we must give first attention to the limitations with respect to geographic boundaries.

2. *Agency size.*—Our agencies must be of the optimum size for effective operation. We must find ways to eliminate the small, separate, independent, unrelated, and ineffective agency. Though this may be a general principle, it has special implications in considering metropolitan service. When limits are set to serve only the residents of a political jurisdiction in a suburban area, an agency is almost inevitably sacrificing the advantages of optimum size. We have far too many one-man agencies operating on a total budget of \$10,000 a year. No automobile or insurance agency operated in this fashion would survive for very long. Our social service agencies need the flexibility which only size can afford. A visiting nurse service as large as that in the District of Columbia can afford to employ a nurse physical therapist, a nurse mental hygiene consultant, and a full-time educational director to back up the staff with specialized skills. The two- and three-nurse agencies in the suburban areas are deprived of these essential elements. The caliber of personnel who can be attracted to an agency of optimum size is almost certain to be higher than that of those willing to engage in solo service. Agency size is surely a significant factor in the quality of service.

3. *Flexibility.*—We must find, or invent, new methods of organizing services that cut across lines which exist only on paper. The District line is not a line, and it certainly is not a wall or a

barrier. Certainly the Potomac River is real and does divide Washington from Virginia, but there are bridges that cross this river and there are thousands upon thousands of cars which cross these bridges daily. We must find ways for our services to cross the bridges and the lines. Especially must we find or invent new devices by which our governmental agencies can deal with each other, or, as has been done in a few instances where there are regional authorities, actually be one with each other.

4. *Effective balance.*—We must help our agencies reach the people as they spread out but at the same time we must encourage our agencies to reach down among the people where they live and work. As agencies grow, as they must to keep pace with population, they should at the same time avoid the hazard of losing touch with the people in the local communities. It is not necessary for an agency to be located near the homes of its clients; clients do go to work. Agencies serving a metropolitan area should have branch offices strategically located throughout the area, providing the advantages both of agency size and of flexibility combined with immediate availability to the clientele.

What is needed, then, is the organization of our agencies with such a balance as to avoid both the dangers of excessive size which can lead to remoteness and the dangers of restrictive eligibility which lead to excessive referrals, lack of flexibility, and a lower quality of service. Agencies serving a limited political community should band together or expand to serve the larger need. Agencies serving an entire metropolitan area must reach down to local contacts with the people they are serving. The slums of our central cities cannot be neglected in order to reach out to the new suburbs.

It would take another paper, and more, to consider the methods by which we can achieve the most effective pattern for social services in a metropolitan community. Basically, our agencies are established by the citizens of the community, supported by the citizens of the community, to serve the citizens of the community. It is therefore ultimately a decision of the citizens as to how we shall organize our agency services. The citizens must assume this responsibility with appropriate leadership and counsel from professional workers.

There is a focal point in most communities where representatives of the volunteer leadership are brought together to examine the organization of social services. This is the welfare planning council. These councils must assume a major share of the responsibility for helping the citizens to organize in a more effective pattern the social services for a metropolitan population.

The outlook ahead is exciting; the expectations are tremendous. As always, the capabilities and imagination of volunteers and professionals will devise in democratic ways the new forms to meet the new conditions of American living.

*Work with Groups in Rapidly Growing Suburban Communities*¹

by JACK STUMPF

“AMERICAN SUBURBIA” exists both outside and inside the legal boundaries of many of our larger cities. The fast-growing and newly populated areas near the periphery of, but within, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Detroit, Denver, Dallas, and Los Angeles tend socially and psychologically to be “suburbs,” although politically they are not. Whether within or outside the city, these suburban areas present quite similar problems to the group work planner, administrator, and practitioner.

9 Conversely, it should be recognized that there are communities outside the big cities but within the metropolitan area that are not suburban in essential character. They are full-fledged satellite communities and now have most of the conditions found in the central city itself. Some examples of these are Newark (New Jersey), in the New York City area, Chester and Upper Darby in the Philadelphia area, and Glendale and Long Beach in the Los Angeles area.

The development of suburban communities has been especially rapid since the Second World War, although the outward expansion from center city to peripheral suburbs has been one of the major characteristics of urban growth in the United States for many years. The extent² of the growth is seen in several facts:

¹ The term “work with groups” is used in the title at the request of the Section II Program Committee. In this paper it will mean *both* “social group work” and “work with groups” (although these terms are now being differentiated technically in some studies). The writer will usually refer to “group work” rather than “work with groups” because he prefers it and thinks of it as the more inclusive term.

² Statistics here and in the following pages are drawn from Philip M. Hauser,

(a) In 1950, the 168 standard metropolitan areas had 84.5 million population, or more than half of the country's total. (b) Between 1940 and 1950, over 80 percent of the total growth was in the standard metropolitan areas. (c) These areas grew 22 percent in that decade, whereas the nonmetropolitan areas grew by only 6 percent. (d) From 1930 to 1950, the metropolitan "rings" around the central cities increased almost three times as fast as the central cities, and the unincorporated territory grew faster than any other areas within the metropolitan rings. (e) Estimates indicate present suburban growth to be more than 1.5 million yearly.

Board and staff members of group work agencies need to understand the reasons for this migration, for it tells quite a bit about the suburban client group. Among the reasons for suburban growth are: (a) the ability of the large number of new families created during and after the Second World War to afford newer and more modern single homes in less crowded neighborhoods; (b) the desire on the part of these young parents for more pleasant and better living conditions generally, especially more green space, more play space, and better schools; (c) the great number of young married people who, having been forced by war conditions to live away from their home towns, chose to settle in a different section of the country, usually in some metropolitan area with a housing shortage and thus created a demand for new dwellings which could only be constructed in suburban districts.

These and other motivations created the two major types of suburbs: (a) the expanded established suburbs where the new population fills in and around the older community and population; and (b) the entirely new suburbs consisting largely of mass housing developments on formerly unoccupied land. It should be noted, too, that some suburbs have become quite sizable cities and have their own constellation of suburbs. Frequently, also, suburban communities grow right up to each other's boundaries, with the consequent loss of identity making it difficult for the residents to know in just which community they actually live.

Perhaps the most discussed sociological characteristic is that

"Demographic and Human Ecology in Relation to Social Work," in *The Social Welfare Forum*, 1956 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956).

suburbs usually lack the normal population spread and distribution by age groupings. Most suburban adults are from twenty-five to forty years of age, most children are ten years old or younger, and there are fewer persons over sixty than are found in city neighborhoods. There are far fewer single and unattached individuals living among the couples of child-bearing age. A higher percentage of suburban couples have children than do married people in general. And families are somewhat larger, with more third, fourth, and fifth children.

(29) The almost total absence of resident nonwhite families in most suburban communities is a notable difference from the general population. There are a few predominantly Negro suburban communities, most of them having started years ago as convenient residential areas for domestic workers adjacent to high-income areas. There are comparatively few racially mixed suburban neighborhoods.

Another significant characteristic is the one-class quality of most suburbs. The majority of families appear to be nearly identical in income and educational level, tastes, and aspirations. And there seems to be a tendency for new neighborhoods to become predominantly, if not almost entirely, of one religious grouping. There are also suburbs composed chiefly of persons from one section of the old central city, somewhat as immigrants from one country, or a particular region of one country, have tended to move into the same neighborhood of an old city in this country.

The varying occupations of the fathers—and mothers—constitute one of the few decisive social differences in many suburban communities. Perhaps more than is generally recognized, the suburbs have become a blending of the “blue-collar” workers and the “white-collar” workers.

(31) An important characteristic of some suburban communities is that the population composition may change rather rapidly. For example, in Delaware, Montgomery, and other counties of suburban Philadelphia, there are neighborhoods and communities that were built ten to fifteen years ago from which the original population has almost entirely moved away. It has been replaced by families of generally younger age, with different backgrounds

and, sometimes, of different religious affiliation. The moving families usually relocate in other suburbs.

A slower migration from one suburban area to another with newer, more modern, more expensive housing, usually further out from the central city, has been described by sociologists as typical. A part of the migratory pattern is for some older residents, in the older type of suburban community, to move back into the city, into more expensive apartments, especially after their children have married. This further removes the "grandparent set" from the younger families.

Among the more important future population trends will be the steady and perhaps ever faster increase of suburban population. The trend toward urbanization is expected to continue, with perhaps 75 percent of our total population living in urban and metropolitan areas by 1975. And the expectation is that a large part of the additional 55 to 75 million people in our population at that time (or an increase of from 37 percent to 50 percent) will want to live in suburbs. Family size will increase for about twenty-five years at least, and many of these children will be living in suburbs. The 28 percent increase in the group from fifteen to nineteen years of age will be especially noticeable in suburban areas. The population sixty-five years and older will have increased by 66 percent in 1975, but this will not likely be felt so much in the suburbs. The proportion of nonwhites will remain about the same—10 percent—but this writer believes a much greater number and percent of Negro families will be living in suburban communities in 1975.

The male labor force, fourteen years of age and older, is expected to decrease from 83 percent to 81 percent, but the female labor force is expected to increase from 31 percent to 38 percent by 1975. Moreover, it is likely that more than one half of women aged 35 to 44 years will be working in 1975, and this will probably be just as true of suburban mothers as of any others. As a matter of fact, it is already true in some suburban communities in the Philadelphia metropolitan area.

Certain physical characteristics of suburban conditions have significance for the agency providing group work services. Among

them is the obvious fact that few housing developments in the suburbs are constructed for lower-middle-income groups; most are built for upper-middle-income groups, and some are built for the upper-income groups. This means that suburban agencies serve comparatively few low-income and clearly economically disadvantaged families.

Suburbs are not alike in physical characteristics although frequently there is much sameness in the type of housing. Some suburban communities are clusters of houses by the scores or by the thousands, and some are ribbons of houses along major traffic arteries. Some have been described as "suburban sprawl," with poor housing, poor streets in partially developed subdivisions, and some have a mixture of dwellings, stores, and suburban industries. Some are well-planned neighborhoods and cities from the standpoint of housing, but few are well planned at the beginning from the standpoint of adequate community facilities for education, welfare, and recreation. And even years later these facilities may not be adequate.

In most new suburban areas the residents are interested first in necessary physical facilities, such as streets, utilities, and sewers. Then they may be interested in improving the schools, in getting schools built in their neighborhood, or obtaining better school bus service. And simultaneously, or soon thereafter, there is interest in recreational facilities. The observation of this writer is that from three to twelve months after moving into a new suburban community the citizens recognize that the yards around the new houses are not adequate play space for the eight- to sixteen-year-old children and are really no substitute for organized play or a social group work experience in an agency.

(6) One of the most prominent characteristics of urban growth in the United States is that cities and suburbs are built neighborhood by neighborhood or community by community, and thus entire neighborhoods and communities tend to become obsolescent and decayed at one time, rather than structure by structure. The increase in this kind of building during the past fifteen years, which is expected to continue, will mean an increase in slums in suburban areas, unless a broad-scale method of arresting housing decay is found. The "do-it-yourself" home improvement interest

has already been utilized by some group work agencies in offering appropriate family group programs.

The trend of industries and offices moving to city periphery and suburbs may alter the character of some presently all-residential neighborhoods. Moreover, some parents in suburban areas, especially fathers, who are now away from early morning to early evening, may thereby gain time at home with their children, or have more leisure for volunteer work.

However, as more and more suburbs are developed further and further distant from the central business district, those parent-workers whose businesses remain in the central city face the prospect of even more travel time, even less time at home with their children, and less time for volunteer work. At least two factors might change this: the reduction of commuting time by expressways, faster trains, monorails, or helicopter service; and the shortening of standard hours of work by means of a four-day workweek or longer paid vacations.

Another physical factor worth mentioning is the increasing need to counteract the filling up of the suburbs and the loss of large open spaces with a vast program of public acquisition of land for community and county parks, regional parks and reservations, and greenways along major expressways and waterways both within and connecting different suburban communities.

In discussing suburban residents and suburban living we must constantly remember that these people have the same basic needs as everyone else and that suburban living provides no quick or easy method of satisfying them. Problems accompany people to the suburbs, and moving sometimes creates new ones or accentuates old ones. As a matter of fact, some sociological studies suggest that the inadequacies of the new suburb motivate the average family to look forward to leaving it, repeating the escape pattern after about five years or as soon thereafter as they can afford a move to a "better" suburb. This makes more difficult the creation of community identification—the sense of belonging to, and being part of, a community—which is one of the major problems of American suburbia.

The typical family moves to a suburb believing that it will find a comfortable and untroubled place in which to live, rear children,

grow in civic prestige, gain security, enjoy leisure, and strive for happiness. Many work hard—and play hard—toward these goals; they find suburban life physically comfortable but emotionally troubled.

The house may not be so livable as was imagined. There is always something to fix, improve, enlarge. But more important, the home was probably purchased at an inflated price with high mortgage payments; there is added indebtedness because of the installment purchase of many necessities and luxuries; the cost of raising the children properly is more than anticipated. Even with higher income there is greater debt. The family economy is vulnerable, and therefore many suburban families are subject to greater insecurity.

This may be one reason why more suburban mothers are working each year. The trend is for women to leave the labor force during the period of greatest fertility and reenter it at age thirty-five, when their children are in school.

But economies may not be the main reason for suburban women working. Working may be a search for a creative outlet for energy, or for a sense of accomplishment in addition to that of being housewife and mother, or for some compensation for the long hours of being relatively alone over many years with the children and without the husband or near-by relatives and friends.

⑤ The commuting father's long absence from home each day, his weariness in the evening, his limited time with the children, have meant, in many suburban families, too many child-care problems for mothers to cope with unaided. The father's daily absence has also tended to make adult suburban life a culture dominated by women. Modern suburbia has been called a "matriarchal" society by some sociologists. The typical suburban father has been called the "organization man" because his driving emotional involvements are with his organization or business, and he is not "at home" in his suburban home community.

A look at most suburbs reveals that child-rearing and child life constitute the major preoccupation, the chief interest, and the most important aspect of the daily routine. The parents try to apply child-rearing information gleaned from social work, psychology, and medicine. They may try to supervise the education,

recreation, and courtship of their children more closely than city parents. The mother spends much time driving the children to and from school, music or dance lessons, friends' homes, and a youth agency. And yet, some children may not receive all the grown-up direction they want or need because of the pressures on the parents.

Crestwood Heights, the study of a Canadian midwestern suburb, reported that "it well may be that a child's failure to achieve is the greatest threat to family integration"; for all of the apparent advantages in this well-to-do suburb and its attentive focus on children, there was indication that on the basis of standardized tests there was "no better mental health, or perhaps worse among children in this community compared with some others elsewhere."³ There were more physical complaints, and the sense of personal freedom, feeling of belonging, sense of personal worth, social skills, and family relations of these children rated from slightly to significantly worse than the mixed group of California youngsters tested. But the authors of *Crestwood Heights* do not believe that the children are in a worse situation than most children. In moving to the suburbs, children too change new problems for old.

From this observer's viewpoint, substantiated by the literature, suburban children get twin distortions of reality: (1) The one-class quality of suburban society is not consistent with what exists in the world beyond the suburbs, and will almost certainly not exist in the later adult world. Moreover, it is not consonant with democratic social relations which the child must learn if he is to be a good citizen. (2) The emphasis on possessions, clothes, cars, allowances, and physical comforts tends to make the suburban child have an absorbing interest in them, and this, too, ill-prepares him for the realities of life and helps perpetuate the emotional problem of his parents which is (in part) inability to find basic security in things, including the comforts of the suburbs per se.

On the other hand, the suburban child sees at least one aspect of modern life well, and that is the highly organized and, for some, overorganized society. The typical suburban child's time is likely to be overscheduled. There is school, then music or dance lessons,

³ John R. Seeley, R. Alexander Sim, and Elizabeth W. Loosley, *Crestwood Heights* (New York: Basic Books, 1956), p. 408.

the Brownies or Cubs, the Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts, the YW or YM, the church or temple, the visits to the girl friend or boy friend, and later the dates and parties—and for all these obligations, transportation is provided by Mom.

As the several studies have indicated, typical suburban life for many children and parents is a kind of civic treadmill, with most people participating in many activities, and many families needing help in making discriminating choices of group or organizational participation and in learning how to use this group or organization experience to achieve basic satisfactions. Most suburban families expect to attend neighborhood and community affairs, extracurricular school activities, and adult education classes, using these and group work agency participation, as clients and volunteer leaders, to help them grow socially and mentally, and perhaps help them to become civic, business, and political leaders.

There is much that is significant about dominant community sentiments in suburban areas for practitioners, administrators, and planners of group work. The way this particular body politic responds to public issues is unusually important for the suburbs because the official government is further removed from the people than it is in cities; it is unusually important for the entire metropolitan region because so many policy-making leaders of the region and central city live in the suburbs, and because the suburbs have increasing weight in state and national elections.

The most apparent community sentiment in many suburbs is distrust and fear of the big city. This seems to persist notwithstanding the higher educational level of suburban adults and despite the fact that such education should lead to understanding the interdependence between the suburban community and the metropolitan area. The central city remains the economic core of the metropolitan area and provides the major resources for cultural, scientific, and recreational advantages, the major communication and transportation links with the outside world, as well as the major problems and the strongest political power.

In the old established suburban areas, where new families fill in around old ones, the leaders, especially those of long residence,

want to maintain their power and frequently use the "fear of the big city" issue to counter new ideas. Frequently there develops conflict between the old and new residents, especially over political leadership. In part, this reflects differences in value judgments not only between the two groups but also between two generations, since old residents are also likely to be of an older generation.

It has been noticed by various observers that the citizens of brand-new suburban communities can get together, have a meeting of minds, and move cooperatively on something of concern to them with more speed, more intense interest, and more supporting manpower.

The rivalries and conflicts among neighboring suburban communities are frequently problems, as is the lack of planning foresight because the suburbs are so concerned with catching up with themselves. There also have been rivalries and conflicts among agencies from neighboring communities, and among committees or projects related to various neighborhoods within one agency.

Agencies in suburban communities may become involved in these same community sentiments. A suburban branch or district board may distrust and may resist the metropolitan regional board. This observer has seen the tug and pull between the established residents and the newer residents over policies, program, and finances within some agency boards.

A major and almost universal problem of suburban group work agencies is insufficient foresight and lack of planning for five years ahead to meet the population pressures and the kinds of problems common to all as well as those distinctive of suburban families. Agency planning must reckon with immediate and long-range needs, and must reconcile local loyalties and larger loyalties. (19)

Another kind of community sentiment that has been detected in many suburbs is the seemingly marked interest in social services under religious auspices. Sociologists write that a higher percentage of families belong to churches and temples in the suburbs than in the cities, but they explain this phenomenon as being the result more of the need for social identification and participation than of deeper spiritual yearnings and convictions. (21)

The most common pattern of agencies providing social and recreational services to groups in American suburbs is believed to be as follows:

1. Public recreation is provided under school, township, or county auspices, mostly in the summer, for children; adult education is available in the winter.
2. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, or Camp Fire Girls offer summer and winter programs.
3. The YMCA or YWCA (there are seldom both except in communities of 35,000 or more) serves both sexes.
4. Some Protestant and Roman Catholic churches and Jewish temples schedule youth activities.
5. Settlements and neighborhood houses seldom exist in suburban areas.
6. Boys' clubs and girls' clubs seldom exist, although some community recreation associations use the "Club" or "Youth Center" label but are not affiliates of any national agency.
7. Most suburbs have some other group activities, such as those sponsored by the 4-H, PTA, or a veterans organization, but there is no usual pattern.

Obviously, in view of the situation described in this paper, work with groups of children and adults is needed. Effective agencies are prepared to adjust their program in scope and content and to develop new ones to meet common and peculiar suburban needs. "More of the same" provided in the city is not enough. Unfortunately, critical appraisal of programs and creativity in developing new methods and skills frequently have been postponed because of the pressure to serve the large number of persons in underserved areas.

Still, there have been some demonstrations of willingness to meet the problems of suburbia: joint YM-YW operations; new-type buildings erected by Y's; decentralized out-of-building services offered by YMCA's, YWCA's, and Jewish community centers; suburban canteens operated under single or joint sponsorship; suburban settlements and neighborhood houses; new districting and programming by Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

An agency providing or aiming to provide group work services

in fast-growing suburban communities has many administrative and planning decisions to make:

Shall it initiate and promote its service, or wait for a clear and strong request for service? The request for youth services usually comes early.

Shall it go into a suburban community alone or collaborate with other agencies through a welfare planning council, if one exists, and try to devise a sound cooperative approach? There are many examples of the former and not enough of the latter.

Shall the service unit be a new and separate agency, or a branch or district of an already existing one? Most suburban scouting and Y services have started as part of an existing agency, although most public recreation and probably most boys' and girls' clubs and neighborhood houses have started separately and as new organizations.

How big should the service area be? How many suburban communities should it include? Experience has varied greatly. There is little agreement about the optimum size of a service area.

How many administrative units or service centers or districts should there be? This seems to depend on the agency, or on the geographical size of the service area and on the size of the population to be served. For financial reasons, new agency ventures in suburban areas tend to start with one administrative unit and service center or district, and subdivide as necessary and practical to do so. Scouting agencies tend to have districts broken down into neighborhoods according to the community pattern. Y's tend to serve a whole suburban area inclusive of many communities, with little structuring of program to coincide with particular communities except for those programs that are conducted in schools or churches of a particular community or where the few decentralized community group workers are employed.

And there are many other administrative questions: What kind of physical facilities are needed? Should the agency provide the meeting place or should schools, churches, and other existing facilities be used? What if there are no schools and churches or other usual resources in particular communities? Will homes, industrial plants, or the township hall be acceptable? What does

the public recreation and/or park authority have to offer and will it provide meeting places, play spaces, and camping areas? If the agency decides to provide its own building, what structure within its ability to pay would best meet the needs? Where should it be located in relation to potential users, transportation, ability to pay, and ability to get adequate space for building outdoor play and parking space? Can it be located in one community without thwarting the intention that it serve many communities? And when a site is finally picked, how can the agency muster enough strength so that the zoning board and political commissioners approve it over the objections of immediate neighbors who believe in group work agencies but do not want one near by—because (they say) of the large number of children or the small number of “undesirables” it will attract to the vicinity; the noise; the automobile traffic and parking problem; and incompatibility with the residential character of the neighborhood.

(2)

And at the same time, there are administrative questions on staffing, financing (including fee structure and support through federated financing), and program direction. What qualifications and what caliber of professional staff are needed to cope with the problems of suburban children and adults? Are professionally educated social workers preferred?

Whatever the administrative problems, and there are many other important ones, the decisions should be made consistent with the development of a total concept of membership and community service, so that staff, program, and facilities can function effectively and efficiently, and so that all agencies can function well together.

Is the practice of group work different in suburban communities? Should work with groups in suburbs be distinctive from that in the central city? Answers to these questions would start with a description of the major characteristics of suburbs and suburban life. Then this description would be recast into statements of suburban social needs. A comparison of the well-known social needs of the urban community with the less-well-known social needs of the suburban community would give some theoretical basis for presuming any differences in practice between the two types of areas. The distinctions and the similarities will be

apparent as a result of analyzing practice in both community settings. But, unfortunately, there are relatively few group records from suburban agencies.

Here are a few distinctions in practice that have been observed by this writer:

There have been some changes in methods of grouping. The large number of members seeking and demanding service has resulted in some agencies enlarging the size of each group. The groups, reflecting the age and the structure, and the one-class quality of suburbs, have had to be much more homogeneous with respect to age, family income, social status, and aspiration level. Where possible, some agencies have tried to encourage groups composed of members from a variety of suburban communities as the only means of getting social heterogeneity.

There have been some changes in the way social needs and individual objectives have been identified. Discerning group workers have to sort out the conflict of myth and reality in new suburbia which results in the people not recognizing their own needs, and in an ambivalence toward the creation of service and their support of it. They articulate their wants clearly, but many times see their needs more slowly than city clients.

There have been some changes in program. The generally higher educational and achievement level of suburban families has resulted in some typical program ideas being considered "old hat" and uninteresting. Program activities tend to be pushed toward higher levels of adventure, creativity, and expense in suburban communities. There is more family participation in group life, and much less group work with neighborhood improvement groups.

There have been some changes in the use of volunteers, although perhaps more in degree than kind. Suburban parents, on the whole, are more able, willing, and ready to volunteer on committees and as group leaders than the average city parents. This factor, combined with limited budgets or policy choice, has meant that a much larger percentage of suburban groups have volunteer workers than city agencies, and professional workers are used in fewer face-to-face programs with groups.

There are many other aspects of practice which should be explored to detect the nature of group work practice in suburban communities. The few points mentioned are merely suggestive of some changes which appear to be occurring in suburban agencies providing services to groups.

The body of accurate knowledge about suburbs and suburban group work is small. There are no pat solutions to their social problems. And the tested agency experience in which to reach sound planning, administrative, and practice judgments appears to be very limited, although encouraging.

A Partnership in Urban Renewal

by SYDNEY B. MARKEY

FROM THE VANTAGE POINT of a community planning organization, urban renewal offers to the official and voluntary social services at least two opportunities to advance toward goals which are fundamental to improving the common welfare. At the same time, social work offers to urban renewal skill in dealing with people which is basic to achieving the quality of citizen participation the renewal program must seek. This presentation will discuss the responsibilities which social work and urban renewal must jointly face if their partnership is to be meaningful to the citizens served by both.

Urban renewal's goal of rehabilitation of physical structures is one of intrinsic value to social work. The betterment of environmental conditions and the resulting corrections in housing facilities are not suggested as panaceas for social ills. However, there are immediate gains for good family living to be realized in urban renewal's removal of blight and slum conditions. Social workers should continue to be among the first to assist efforts by government or voluntary forces in any revitalized attacks on the problem of deterioration in the physical resources of the community.

A second goal which can be advanced comes from the urban renewal requirement of citizen participation as part of the workable program through which a city qualifies for federal funds. The phrase "citizen participation" is an intriguing one for social workers.

An examination of citizen participation as it has become part of the muscle of social work's daily practice is in order. First, however, the profession should hail the requirement for what it can mean in public acceptance of a practice fundamental to social

(9)

(47)

(6)

work skills and, at the same time, basic to processes in a democracy.

Through urban renewal's subscription to citizen participation, social work stands to recruit a host of important friends on behalf of a tenet basic to the profession. By the same token, social work must accept responsibility for the direction and quality of citizen participation to be practiced.

In essence, all forms of professional social services are rooted in the concept of participation, wherein those served "take or have a part or share in" the program for which the social worker is responsible. From the cradle to the grave, from the unmarried mother to an aged person under care, the participation of the client in the plans to be made with and for him is foremost as a goal sought by social workers.

The history of social work shows the profession has given major attention and painstaking study to the development of skill in understanding and improving participation from those to be served. Whether in operation of public assistance, child care center, social settlement, family counseling agency, hospital ward, summer camp, half-way house, children's institution, prison yard, or any other area of social service, participation by the client is a key to effective performance from the social worker.

Social work knows the meaning and value of participation at the many levels wherein citizens perform it. The group aspects of participation have had significant achievements under social work auspices. The citizen participation sparked by social work which led to public demands for changes such as child labor laws, consumers' benefits, court reforms, and improvements in public education is just one of the social action results born from group activities.

Participation by agency staff and board of managers in problems of operations is still another form of sharing in which social work has demonstrated skill. A three-way approach, including the clients served, is being utilized in many social service agencies.

These few listings of practices through which the social services have demonstrated skill in securing participation should serve to document the profession's belief in it. The results of such practices, in achieving action by the persons involved, whether as an indi-

vidual doing things for himself or as a member of a group working with others, has established social work's aptitude at citizen participation. What urban renewal offers is a challenge to put to work on its behalf the conviction and tested skill social work has regarding citizen participation.

How can such a partnership between social work and urban renewal be achieved? Social workers should ask that its skill be part of the planning for citizen participation at the very earliest phase of urban renewal activity. Such practice does not exist today, as a recent check by the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) reveals.

Based on a survey NAHRO conducted in the summer of 1956, it is evident that urban renewal and welfare agencies are not working together. From 250 cities replying, among the 500 the survey approached, in only twelve instances did all four types of agencies involved indicate the existence of a basis for working together. The partnership of public housing authorities, redevelopment agencies, public welfare departments, and community welfare councils is described by the survey as appearing to be "limited and superficial, confined to points of necessary contact." NAHRO's and the National Social Welfare Assembly's joint Committee on Housing and Welfare concludes that a sense of urgency exists for all parties concerned to deepen the interrelationship between them.

As practitioners found among at least two of the four parties concerned, social workers from public welfare departments and all other agencies, voluntary and official, making up a community welfare council, should feel this sense of urgency. If they do not, they can expect to be ignored, except in those rare instances where urban renewal officials recognize the need to bring social work's skill to bear and seek it out in the total program.

Social work cannot allow the initiative to rest entirely with renewal officials. The fact remains that the lives of people are involved. These individuals, these families, these boys and girls, these men and women, are largely from among the clients of social service agencies. They may be recent arrivals in the city, or among the oldest of residents; most live in the worst sections and will

39

require relocation. NAHRO says that more than a hundred thousand families are being displaced by urban renewal activities across the country, and the number grows daily.

Where will they go? What is to be their plight? Many are eligible for public housing, but this program is unable to cope with their needs. A high proportion of the displaced families are non-white and are unable to find replacement homes in standard areas or at prices they can afford. A growing number are among the aging. Will they have adequate relocation services of which social work will be an integral part? Will they become more of the hard-core group of the social work load, harboring deeper and more serious elements of individual frustration and family breakdown?

If another trend in urban renewal prevails, a different segment of the community becomes involved. In Philadelphia the slum areas, wherein the greater number of dependency clients of social agencies are found, are not being tackled. Emphasis is to be on neighborhoods which are only beginning to show signs of deterioration. Here preservation through physical improvements will be the goal. In such neighborhoods of lower-middle-class families, the group of persons who need to be sought out to be involved in citizen participation are also known to social workers serving in family counseling, scouting, day care, Y's, and similar organizations.

However and wherever urban renewal attempts to involve citizens, the basic elements of true participation must be practiced. It is at this point that the social worker's experiences are invaluable and must be recognized for their full implications by renewal officials. Getting the citizen who is, in part, the creator of the problem of urban blight to be a partner to its solution does not come about through the form of magic some call "public relations." There are officials who appear to subscribe to the idea that participation is on tap for the turning on and off as they may need it in the renewal program. Here is where the social worker should bring to bear his experience and knowledge as to what constitutes the requirements of a penetrating program of citizen participation.

The involvement of citizens in the planning for, and execution of, urban renewal programs must be based on the concept of working with people rather than for people. It means aiding people to accomplish their own objectives through a process which respects self-determination. The citizens requested to participate in urban renewal must believe their best judgments are wanted and will have a direct bearing on decisions to be reached.

Social work knows that the genesis of citizen participation lies in each individual recognizing his basic responsibility to meet his own needs to the extent of his ability. Concurrent is the individual's recognition of the interdependence of people; the welfare of each affects the welfare of all.

Since the citizens to be involved are found at many levels in the community and their understanding and interest in urban renewal vary greatly, the role of the worker serving as the enabler who unlocks the spontaneity of citizen action is a key one. Social workers engaged in community organization know what such a role must be if neighborhood organization and leadership are to respond with the sustained involvement in the daily process of decision-making which urban renewal wants.

This skill in involving citizens must be respected for what it represents. The techniques to be used call for a custom-made approach in each neighborhood, with experience showing that no two respond in the same way. Citizen participation does not come about as a form of automation. It is a process deeply imbedded in principles of democracy and one for which social work has an established performance record.

Recently the chairman of the Philadelphia Housing Authority called attention to the increasing number of problem families among the 45,000 persons living in the 10,933 units of public housing. He pointed out that families evicted because of housing code enforcement resulting from urban renewal activities are a major source of new residents of public housing.

Following the appearance of this statement in the local press, a member of the Council of Property Owners wrote to the editor saying that steps should be immediately taken to protect the \$100 million already invested in local public housing before asking the

Federal Government for more. His answer to the problem was "educate the tenants."

(15) The term "educate the tenants" is an example of oversimplification to which the public is too prone in seeking answers to complicated social problems. This well-intentioned property owner turns to education as the cure-all in eradicating problems among families living in public housing. He fails to identify the need by social work to reach out case by case, individual by individual, with its best professional skills.

As a member of the public he has still to supply the needed tools in personnel and resources so that the education social work offers through rehabilitative services is used in these problem family situations. There is a failure to recognize the need for deep therapy, and investment in it is worth the cost. Too much dependency is placed in treating surface symptoms in the hope that something magical happens in the name of education.

This same danger of oversimplification exists in urban renewal's use of citizen participation as a tool to carry out renewal's purpose. Real citizen participation is worth achieving in urban renewal, just as it has demonstrated its value in social work processes. A partnership in which urban renewal and social work share responsibility and the skills of social work are fully utilized by urban renewal will make for a brand of citizen participation that will have a real and lasting effect in creating a society both partners want to achieve.

Neighborhoods Rally to Help Youth

by LILLIAN D. ROBBINS

THE YORKVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD in the upper east side of New York City is one of the most polygenetic in the world. Living, sometimes too literally, a stone's throw from each other are persons of tremendous wealth and others enduring the most abject poverty. There are early Americans of Anglo-Saxon stock and immigrants of the turn of the century and after the First World War, chiefly from Eastern, Central, and Southern Europe. And there are refugees from the holocausts of more recent years. (31)

In Yorkville there are warm homes, but too frequently there are merely crowded shelters, especially among the more disadvantaged of the population. Here family tensions are strident. Alcoholism is rife. There is thievery, vandalism, arson, drug addiction. Youngsters are, or consider themselves, unwanted.

The eastern belt of Yorkville, where the lower income families are congregated, is a subneighborhood in a peculiar state of transition. It adjoins the most socially desirable residential area in the entire city. Today it is being strangled by an incursion of luxury housing. The resultant dislocation of the long-term residents of the area exacerbates the strains and frustrations to which these families are already subject.

The toll on youth is great. (49)

In one fifteen-block district in lower east Yorkville, according to the New York City Youth Board, the rate of juvenile delinquency (known police apprehensions) rose from 21.7 per thousand children between six and twenty years of age in 1951 to 33.9 in 1952 and 46.7 in 1953. (29)

In the fall of 1952 a resident in the area who had been a volunteer worker at the Lenox Hill Neighborhood Association had her

bicycle stolen. She reported the loss to the police. Their efforts having produced no results, she decided to make her own inquiries. She approached some of the youngsters in the neighborhood and was soon able to trace the theft to a group of boys between the ages of eight and fifteen. She learned that stealing was a practice with them; they were able to make keys to fit bicycle locks; they broke into parked cars; they engaged in shoplifting, selling stolen property, and teaching younger children to steal. She made home visits and found that the parents of some of these youngsters were totally unable to cope with the children. She made inquiries of other residents and storekeepers in the neighborhood. She found some apathetic because they felt it futile to try to do anything about the problem. Others admitted they feared reprisals from neighborhood gangs if they reported such antisocial acts.

Through her service at Lenox this volunteer was aware of the kind of youngsters who utilized the Neighborhood House program and those whom it was unable to sustain. She had learned, too, of the various agencies in the area, their services and their limitations. She set out to enlist their help in contending with the problem.

She visited family service agencies, schools, hospitals, settlement houses, the City Youth Board, the Big Brothers, the Police Department, and numerous other agencies. She talked with members of the Yorkville Welfare and Health Council, asking the assistance of this coordinating organization in convening a special committee to develop a plan for attacking the problem.

In the spring of 1953 such a committee was formed comprising professional and lay personnel, including local businessmen. The members had an organizational meeting and appointed several subcommittees: a nominating committee; a finance and budget committee; a program committee; a personnel committee; and a committee on organization. It was decided that both lay and professional personnel would give particular attention to the program committee while laymen would predominate on the finance and budget committees. The program committee recommended that a worker be engaged, a trained social worker if possible, to

work with delinquent and predelinquent youngsters on the streets, in their hangouts—in short, wherever they were to be found. The focus was to be referral to existing agencies while sustaining individual and group relationships.

The committee on organization considered the question of possible independent incorporation or affiliation with an existing agency. This committee recommended that the new organization become affiliated with Lenox Hill Neighborhood Association since this was the largest multifunctional agency in Yorkville and best equipped to supervise the worker and to assume administrative and fiscal responsibility for the project. The decision to affiliate with an existing agency was also made because the tax exemption of an incorporated organization could be applied immediately to an affiliated committee, thus simplifying and expediting the matter of securing tax-deductible contributions.

The other committees moved ahead. Funds were raised through individual and organizational contributions and a benefit at a local movie house. Officers were elected. The board of directors of the Lenox Hill Neighborhood Association voted to establish a special committee to be known as "Neighbors United for Youth of the East Sixties and Seventies." The chairman and treasurer of Neighbors United were elected to full membership on the Lenox Hill board. Other Lenox Hill board members as well as staff also serve on the Neighbors United committee.

In July, 1954, a staff worker, a generic social worker, was engaged and the new neighborhood project was launched.

Many amusing and some poignant stories can be told of the efforts to enlist neighborhood interest in the project. The instigator was consumed with an overwhelming compulsion to "get the show on the road." Her fevered dedication was highly contagious and catalyzed the community to action. Except for a few die-hards, there was an amazingly enthusiastic response to her call for support. One hospital administrator said that if the idea worked, he would be glad to contribute the salary that was being paid to one maintenance worker just to replace windows broken by neighborhood gangs. In the meantime, the hospital did make a generous contribution.

A local movie house manager offered to have every theater in the neighborhood advertise the new program to stamp out delinquency. This particular movie was the one frequented most often by youngsters in trouble; the offer was rejected with sincere thanks.

A veterans' organization loaned its store-front headquarters as an office and meeting place for the project. Later, after innumerable complaints from members, the officers, still sympathetic but unable to withstand pressure from their colleagues, asked Neighbors United to vacate their premises. They had found cement in their mailbox. Their locked cupboard had been rifled. Their neighbors complained that very young boys and girls smoked promiscuously in the store. The reputation of the veterans' group was at stake.

But many, many others gave and gave again—their funds, their time, their moral support.

This story of organizing a neighborhood to help youth does not end here; for, instead of juvenile delinquency becoming epidemic, it was the community response that caught fire. Neighbors United started its work on the streets in the summer of 1953. In the fall of 1954 the women's auxiliary of one of the synagogues in the area invited members of women's organizations from several near-by churches to consider with them the possibility of working together on some community project. At their first meeting they decided that juvenile delinquency was one of the most pressing current problems they would like to tackle. In February, 1955, four churches and synagogues convened an open community forum on juvenile delinquency. Some five hundred members attended. Soon thereafter, "Interfaith Neighbors" was formed. Other churches and synagogues were invited to join the original group of four, and again it was decided that the best way to meet the problem was to provide a "detached" or "street" worker. They chose the subneighborhood closest to the interested churches, one having a rising rate of juvenile delinquency. In this area the rate was 17.2 per thousand in 1953, 25.2 in 1954, and 30.9 in 1955.

Interfaith Neighbors also formed special committees similar to those of Neighbors United. They met with representatives of

Neighbors United in order to learn from the latter's experience and to avoid duplication of effort. Representatives of Interfaith Neighbors then approached the Lenox Hill Neighborhood Association to discuss the possibility of committee affiliation similar to that which had been arranged by Neighbors United. This was done, two members of Interfaith Neighbors also being elected to membership on the board of directors of Lenox Hill.

Church organizations contributed the initial funds for the project. A second street worker was engaged to help the youth of Yorkville. Some of the church representatives expected the worker to ascertain the religious affiliation of the youngsters and refer them to the appropriate church for guidance. Others recognized that no such question should be raised. One church member explained to another that if one is mugged, he does not stop to ask the religion of the mugger. The goal of Interfaith Neighbors was to be the reduction of juvenile delinquency in order that the entire community might be protected and benefited. This point of view has prevailed.

The Interfaith Neighbors worker began his assignment in July, 1956. He has been supervised by the Neighbors United worker, a veteran of two years on the streets.

In the fall of 1956 a Joint Program Committee was formed with representatives of Neighbors United and Interfaith Neighbors meeting monthly to consider matters of common concern and to insure maximum cooperation and collaboration.

In the area where Neighbors United concentrated its efforts, the rate of juvenile delinquency was reduced from 46.7 in 1953, to 34.9 in 1954, and to 25.9 in 1955. It was 24 per thousand in 1956.

In the district just south, where Interfaith Neighbors has been working primarily, the rate was reduced from 30.9 in 1955 to 18.1 in 1956. However, the district north of the area served by Neighbors United has seen a rise in juvenile delinquency from 28.2 in 1953 to 41.2 in 1954 and 47.8 in 1955. A drop took place in 1956, the rate reported for that year being 42.5. One might be tempted to conclude that these new projects have driven youngsters to perpetrate their antisocial acts elsewhere. However, the fact re-

23

mains that there is no street worker in this northern section that obviously needs such service.

Again the fire of community concern has spread. Both Neighbors United and Interfaith Neighbors are extending their propaganda to the northern area, Neighbors United attempting to arouse local residents, businessmen, and agencies while Interfaith Neighbors is infiltrating the churches and synagogues with its message, "Practice what you preach." A prophet might well predict that a third worker will be roaming the streets of Yorkville in another year.

Both Neighbors United and Interfaith Neighbors have a high degree of autonomy of which they are very protective. They view their work as demonstration pilot projects, the former to point the way to organizing the community for prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency, the latter to set an example to churches and synagogues to work together on a neighborhood basis to eradicate this growing social problem. They look to the Lenox Hill Neighborhood Association to promote and protect a high professional standard of operation.

Through these two committees hundreds of local citizens have had an opportunity to share in a program that has given them tremendous gratification. This has been an important by-product.

I cannot stress too much the great value these new projects have had, not only in arousing the community to "Operation Bootstrap," but also in liberalizing traditional social worker practices. Too often, the group worker isolates himself within the comparative comfort of a building program, helping many who need him but often rejecting others who need him even more. The caseworker is frequently insulated from disorganized families who are so unhappy and confused they need someone who is willing to reach out to them and accept them where and as they are, rather than waiting for a self-initiated request, an expression of "felt need" for help. The street worker has made us face up to social discards around the corner, even on our own doorsteps.

Those agencies which have bent their programs in order to be

able to respond to the referrals made by the street worker are finding new and rewarding satisfactions, though the road is a bit bumpy at times. We are pleased and proud to be a part of a neighborhood that has rallied to help youth.

New Ways of Looking at Community Organization for Child Welfare

by *FRED DelliQUADRI*

(5)
(9) **F**OR MANY YEARS, child welfare workers have had some identification with community organization—its methods, techniques, and goals. In fact, much of the past success in the widespread development of public child welfare services, especially in rural areas and areas of special need, can be attributed to the community organization efforts of child welfare workers. Many of us who were child welfare workers can well remember our involvement in the interpretation of programs, initiation of meetings, community action programs, legislative developments, and the like. All of this, we felt, was essential in getting the job done for children and youth who needed care and attention whether they were dependent, neglected, predelinquent, or delinquent.

(145) One must hasten to say, however, that community organization was not a primary function of a state division of child welfare; in fact, few, if any, of these operations provided or recognized the need for a skilled consultation service to local areas in the community organization function. Although today some states do provide for a degree of consultation, very few have recognized the need for embarking on such a broad-scale operation as we are now experiencing in the state of Wisconsin. We employ ten full-time professional personnel in the Community Services Section of our State Division for Children and Youth and expect to add three additional consultant positions in 1958. These workers may be termed "enablers" and "creative leaders." They use their professional skills in a wide variety of ways and settings to achieve social welfare goals. For example, they provide services to intergroup

committees; render consultation services to citizens, youth, and agencies; engage in education, interpretation, mobilization, and promotion; and, important also, provide supporting activities, such as research and reporting.

To understand why Wisconsin has moved rapidly in the community organization aspects in the child welfare field in the past eight years, let us look at some past events.

In 1945 the Wisconsin Legislature appointed an interim committee to study the problem of juvenile delinquency. The latter was as much discussed and debated then as it is today, with citizens clamoring for some action to control and alleviate the problem. The Wisconsin legislative committee held a series of twenty-two public hearings throughout the state and from its discussions and deliberations recommended, and the Legislature accepted, the establishment of the Youth Service Commission in 1947. This new legislation was based on the model youth authority act as promulgated by the American Law Institute. It marked Wisconsin as the second state (California being the first) to incorporate some of the principles and concepts of the model act. (Those who are interested in programs serving delinquents and youthful offenders should read Bertram Beck's *Five States*¹ for an objective evaluation of the programs in California, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Texas, and Massachusetts.)

The Wisconsin program differed from the model youth authority act in two respects: (1) administration of the act was placed in the Department of Public Welfare as part of a total welfare program; and (2) greater stress was placed on the prevention of delinquency.

The first two years of the operation of the youth authority act revealed many administrative difficulties which led to a complete reorganization of the total state public welfare structure. The reorganization in 1949 provided for five major divisions: Corrections; Mental Hygiene; Public Assistance; Children and Youth; and Business Management. To the Division for Children and Youth were assigned the preventive aspects of the Youth Services Act. The act itself is probably one of the broadest of its kind in

¹ Bertram M. Beck, *Five States* (Philadelphia: American Law Institute, 1951).

42

the country. Not only does it include a statement of purpose, namely, "to assist local communities to foster the development and strengthening of programs for the control of influences detrimental to youth and to encourage and establish community councils," but it is also equally specific in authorizing certain activities. In order to promote the best interests of the children of this state the Department is directed to:

1. Adequately equip juvenile courts
2. Provide an integrated and coordinated program for all delinquent, neglected, and dependent children
3. Collect, and collaborate with other agencies in collecting, statistics and information useful in determining the cause and amount of delinquency and crime in this state or in carrying out the powers and duties of the department
4. Render assistance to communities in their efforts to combat delinquency and social breakdown likely to cause delinquency and crime and assist them in setting up programs for coordinating the total program, including the improvement of law enforcement
5. Assist schools in extending their particular contribution in locating and helping children vulnerable to delinquency and improving their services to all youth
6. Assist communities in setting up recreational commissions and in extending and broadening recreational programs so as to reach all children
7. Assist in extending the local child care programs so as to reach all homes needing such help
8. Assist in recruiting and training voluntary leaders for youth-serving organizations
9. Assist localities in securing specialized services, such as medical, psychiatric, psychological, and social work services, when existing agencies are not able to supply them
10. Assist localities in making surveys of needs and available resources
11. Assist in appraising the achievement of local programs
12. Serve in a general consultative capacity, acting as a clearing-house, developing materials, arranging conferences, and participating in public addresses and radio programs

13. Develop and maintain an enlightened public opinion in support of a program to control delinquency.

In implementing this program, the first problem was to find a practical and workable focus for our staff services. We began by formulating the following basic premises:

1. That the primary responsibility for action to improve services for children and youth rests in the local community. The role of the state staff is to serve in a consultant and resource capacity.

2. That the most effective program to prevent juvenile delinquency is one which strengthens services for all children and youth rather than one for delinquents alone.

3. That to make such programs effective, it is necessary to employ sufficient staff to devote full time to the community services program.

4. That we should take advantage of Federal child welfare funds to encourage and implement the development of the community organization aspects of child welfare.

5. That it is necessary and essential to build into the total child welfare staff a close teamwork relationship pertaining to all services.

With much assurance, I can say that these basic considerations have been accomplished to the point that our community services activities are now firmly established among the major operating activities of the Division for Children and Youth.

A quick look at the organization chart of the Division for Children and Youth would reveal four major sections: casework services; institutional services; administrative services; and community services. The latter section is headed by a chief with five state office special consultants (recreation, law enforcement, juvenile court, youth participation, and group work and public information), and cooperative use of central office staff in research, statistics, psychological services, casework, staff development. Also included in this operation are five community services consultants who are generalists. Located strategically throughout the state, these operate in conjunction with other divisional and departmental services and provide ongoing consultation to counties

50

throughout the state. These consultants are responsible to the over-all district supervisor of services for children and youth.

It is impossible here to relate in detail the variety of activities resulting from, or a part of, our community services responsibilities. Each one of the following areas would reveal an exciting and most satisfying experience in furthering effective and better services to children and youth:

Collection of statistics.—Within a year, we hope to achieve 100 percent uniform reporting from all juvenile courts in Wisconsin. In 1956 we initiated a law enforcement reporting system for sheriffs and police departments. Already, 127 jurisdictions are reporting to the Division for Children and Youth. Coverage and uniform reporting are essential to knowledge of conditions and for future planning.

Assistance to communities in planning and cooperation.—Innumerable consultation visits have been made to communities interested in the organization and function of voluntary community councils and to other local planning groups concerned with health, welfare, education, and recreation. Noteworthy is the fact that ongoing staff services have been provided to the Governor's Committee on Children and Youth, the staging of five biennial Governor's Conferences, and the publication of a quarterly bulletin for this organization. Wide use has also been made of three division publications: *Teamwork in the Community*, *What Makes a Committee Tick*, and *When Planning a Survey*.

Juvenile law enforcement.—Besides initiating and promoting a uniform statistical juvenile reporting system, consultation is provided and surveys are made of juvenile law enforcement programs. Highlighting this program is the annual training institute operated in conjunction with the University of Wisconsin. Some two hundred police officers and sheriffs attend these sessions.

Juvenile court.—Departmental representatives provide special consultation to juvenile courts, in the development of a manual of procedure for juvenile court judges, the staffing of the juvenile judges association, and at the quarterly meeting of the juvenile court judges committee.

Assisting schools in early identification of children vulnerable

to delinquency.—In cooperation with various specialists and local school officials, child adjustment surveys demonstrate techniques for early and systematic identification of children showing evidence of poor mental health, so that help may be offered before serious problems develop. These projects are now a part of the comprehensive surveys made in behalf of communities.

Assistance in extending recreational programs.—Almost all communities become concerned with proper recreational programs and facilities. There has been a constant demand for consultation and community recreation surveys (some thirty-five major consultations and surveys in the past five years). In addition, there has been considerable activity in planning training institutes and conferences for recreation workers.

Group work and youth participation.—One of the most heart-warming developments in our community services program has taken place in our work with youth and youth-serving organizations. Young people can, and should be, participating members of their communities. Youth groups, individually or in cooperation, can undertake projects affecting the whole community. Youth can work with adults in planning and executing programs to improve the community. Some projects which have been carried out by youth have included: establishing community recreation centers; working with adults on fund drives and "get out the vote" and blood donor campaigns; promoting driver education in schools; conducting parking surveys for cities; planning and carrying out tree planting programs; developing swimming beaches, community libraries, and youth employment bureaus. Some sixty thousand young people have been involved in activities of this type since 1950.

Services to families and migrant agricultural workers.—Several thousand agricultural workers and their families migrate into Wisconsin each year for seasonal employment. Services to these families have occupied the attention of our community services, especially in work with employers and communities in such areas as welfare, recreation, and day care.

Public information.—Keeping in mind what a prominent social scientist has said, that "we know better than we do," we have set

up services to attack what seems to us to be the fundamental problem—how to motivate citizens to act on the knowledge and information that are available. It is, in other words, essentially a problem in public education. To this end, we have distributed thousands of pamphlets, brochures, and guides to be used as tools and resources in community organization; arranged conferences, institutes, and forums; and developed resources or use of mass media for public interpretive programs. The professional staff deliver literally hundreds of speeches during the course of a year.

Community surveys and survey follow-up.—Our community organization efforts in behalf of children and youth come to a focal point in what we term the "Community Survey." We have a deep conviction that it is used as an effective and intensive method of public education through a maximum of citizen and youth participation in the survey process.

Surveys as such are, of course, nothing new. In fact, the very term "survey" sometimes leaves citizens cold because of past experiences which involved some outside "expert" who came in to tell them what was wrong with their services—and left a survey report which more often than not was soon gathering dust on some official shelf.

We have been doing some experimenting and, we believe, some pioneering in an "action-oriented" type of survey, designed especially to involve a maximum of citizen participation. Such surveys are undertaken only upon official request of a county board or a city council. We have found that being asked to come in and having official status have been tremendously important factors in the acceptance of the survey team by the community. The team consists of persons on our state staff who specialize in public recreation, group work, youth participation, law enforcement, juvenile court services, staff development, and other public welfare areas. These surveys are not fly-by-night affairs. They extend, usually, over eight to twelve months and involve as many as three hundred to four hundred local citizens and youth active in various survey committees. Emphasis is upon lay and youth participation, with agency staff and professionals serving as resource people. The final report is compiled by the survey staff after an in-

tensive process of screening by various citizen committees. The final recommendations adopted are truly a product of these citizen participants, because they have the final word as to what stays in the report and what goes out. Fact-finding and writing of reports are generally done by staff. Citizen participation comes to bear at the critical point of deliberation, decision, and action on the reports and recommendations.

The final report is usually printed by our state department with the local county or community sharing the cost. There is no other cost to the local community except for incidental expenses. Local agencies and governmental services do, however, make substantial contributions in other ways, such as provision of office space, some clerical help, supplies, postage, and so forth. Total local costs usually run from \$300 to \$500.

Usually 2,000 reports are printed and distributed to official committees in a community as well as to schools, churches, PTA's, and various community groups. These serve as blueprints for immediate community action and for future years.

Since 1950 our Community Services staff has completed comprehensive surveys in eighteen counties and five cities. The story would not be complete without mention of the excellent cooperation of, and delegation of staff persons from, the following state departments and agencies: State Board of Health, Public Instruction, Free Library Commission, Vocational Rehabilitation, Employment Service, University of Wisconsin, Commission on Human Rights, and Motor Vehicle Division. In the Department of Public Welfare itself, contribution of staff time from the Division of Public Assistance, Mental Hygiene, and Corrections has made it possible actually to look at a community and its total provisions for services to children and youth.

One would naturally ask what have been the results of these surveys. Although it is not possible to date to measure results in terms of reduction in number of official delinquents in a county or city, there are tangible and practical results that can be documented in terms of community action on specific recommendations. Compiling a list of such community accomplishments is one way of measuring survey results. This the Division has attempted

to do in a series of "Progress Reports," the first one issued in December, 1952, and in subsequent annual reports in 1953, 1954, and 1955. Summarized, these reports show 99 specific recommendations acted upon prior to December, 1952, with further action on some of the same recommendations, and new action on other recommendations, in 221 instances reported in subsequent annual reports for 1953, 1954, and 1955.

(5) Specific recommendations fall in the general areas of health, welfare, education, recreation, community planning, church, vocational guidance, employment, library facilities, and law enforcement. Recommendations may reflect need for child welfare workers, public health nurses, juvenile police officers, probation officers, recreation facilities, child guidance clinics, PTA organizations, dance hall regulations, trained personnel in county schools, school social workers, family life education, health committee, parks and playgrounds, church and school relationships, family counseling services, community councils and youth participation, and many others.

Again I repeat that our community organization program has demonstrated its value to a point where it is an established and major function of our total program serving children and youth.

(34)
(42) (17) Added significance to the concept of community organization and prevention was highlighted by Governor Thomson of Wisconsin in his message to the 1957 legislature when he said: "We need to do more preventive work in the field of public welfare, we need an experimental program designed to bring together—at the community level—all the skills necessary for successful work in the field of juvenile delinquency and related social ills." To back up this statement, he has introduced a bill in the Wisconsin Legislature asking for a million-dollar appropriation for a five-year period to carry on intensified demonstration programs in certain selected communities. If this sum of money is granted it will be an exacting challenge, not only to social work, but to other professions that want to strengthen and preserve family life, to give real meaning to the slogan of the Mid-Century White House Conference "For Every Child—a Fair Chance for a Healthy Personality."

Time to Stop Shadowboxing in Our Juvenile Delinquency Fight

by HARRISON ALLEN DOBBS

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY is a mean opponent to grip and defeat. It challenges in sinister ways that exact unusual prowess. Because the urgency of this problem is felt countrywide, the American public clamors for its prompt solution. (49)

Unfortunately, few people comprehend the complexity this issue has; fewer still are willing to do much about it. Doubt arises as to what most citizens think and what they want accomplished. This uncertainty puts a stumbling block in the way of its lessening. Therefore, all of us connected with youthful offenders need to do careful stocktaking. We must attain for ourselves, and pass on to others, clearer understanding of the factors involved in this conflict. At the same time, we must discover and promote abler ways and means of fighting.

Integration and coordination of effort hinge on all that is being well done. Toward this end, five questions are asked and briefly answered. (1) Can more than surface-scratching activity be expected in attempts to treat juvenile delinquents and decrease delinquency? (2) Do opposing viewpoints about how to handle this problem impede community progress? (3) What basic concepts ought to go into a juvenile delinquency philosophy? (4) Are there current developments in the field of its prevention and treatment that show how higher dividends on social investment can be attained? (5) Is the outlook gloomy or hopeful? These points interrelate closely. Therefore, this account should have, if taken as a whole, a qualitative value that one never gets on an additive basis. (39)

Ideas have lasting consequences. Where and into what the ones

promulgated might lead is undeterminable. Our battle is a serious one, and everything that is reasonable should be tried so as to win it. Juvenile delinquency needs to be boldly and imaginatively confronted.

Citizens often ask that the impossible be done. Many demand that juvenile delinquents stop posthaste their misbehavior and quit hurting others and themselves. Some feel that this cessation can be achieved by parental ordering. More are willing, when dire situations require it, to put tax money into apprehending, judicial, and institutional programs. These steps, however, are expected to terminate their social problem and that of the child or youth involved.

Is this anticipation realistic? Why does this attitude have widespread prevalence? What etiological factors underlie this costly delusion? How does faulty knowledge delay getting at basic conditions and impede coordinated activity? Should more be tried to correct public opinion about the nature of problems which impair violating children and youth, and about what is needed to keep children decent instead of becoming delinquent? Do we have firm enough conviction that the way we contend with this enemy is right?

There is a major reason why shadowboxing and surface-scratching pertaining to delinquency stay to the fore. This rests on the fact that its causes and treatment are tied to social reality over which, singly or corporatively, we remain almost powerless. Just as man is unable to manage the tides of the sea, so man's control of oceanic social change presents a like dilemma. However, cultural phenomena, unlike physical ones, relate directly to feeling, intelligence, imagination, and goals. Social forces, therefore, are different from those that are physical. This quality gives hope of some control and direction.

Nevertheless, human potential, powerful though it may be, is hard to channel and utilize. This difficulty is particularly apparent in our kind of society where coercion and totalitarian methods are its archenemies. Notwithstanding, the possibility to modify and improve conditions is always there. We may never get like-minded or single-purposed or strong enough to undo or steer what

is evolving socially; but there is this chance, at least in some respects.

No one denies that momentous community changes are occurring. These influence, overtly and covertly, social institutions in which all persons hold necessary membership. Cultural changes today alter these and patterns of individual and group behavior in many ways. Although much that is appearing affords undreamed gains and opportunities, there are facets of it that are detrimental and costly.

Harmful societal developments promote conditions in which juvenile delinquency starts and thrives. This connection explains why much that deals with this particular problem has to concern itself with sociological and psychological factors which are aspects far removed from basic causes. Treatment and preventive measures often are unsuccessful on this account or count less than required.

Urbanizing, industrializing, internationalizing, militarizing, and other mass processes are now apparent in all American life. Each becomes a consequential social force that settles in large part what every citizen believes, wants, and can expect. Man today grows more materialistic, alienated, and anxious. These characteristics necessarily exact costly tolls. Children and youth pay a part of the price for social change that naturally carries with it both assets and liabilities.

Current shifts in male-female polarity succinctly illustrate this ambivalence. Although implications are too diffuse to enter into, it suffices to suggest how social change affects parents and patterns of American family living because of this *rapprochement* of the sexes. Children need both the unconditional love that women offer and the conditioned love of men. These are required if boys and girls are to develop into mature persons with the necessary motherly and fatherly conscience. As men assume more of women's prerogatives and traits and women more of those of men, it grows increasingly hard to rear children satisfactorily. This is especially so where increasing competitive interests and demands outside the home exact the time, energy, and drive of many more parents. Where children and youth are badly shortchanged be-

cause of altered developmental conditions, it is a wonder that so many still manage to stay decent rather than grow delinquent.

Therefore, society is directly involved in this delinquency matter. It is society that fosters community and family conditions which bring about delinquency. Citizens should do all that is feasible to compensate new impediments. This is so, even if much which they ask our agencies to do has to have surface-scratching qualities. The assertions that follow have immediate and ultimate meaning of personal and group importance.

It is asserted that:

a) Juvenile delinquency is endemic in our kind of society and its causes stem back to social conditions; and, so long as these conditions continue, the problem of juvenile delinquency must persist although controlled and lessened.

b) Rapid cultural changes in the United States today are bound to affect patterns of individual, family, and community living in both a positive and negative manner; and, because of the situation, it is unrealistic to expect only favorable outcomes of children's growing and developing.

c) The current volume and kinds of delinquency relate directly to what communities do, or do not do, in relation to the proper growing and maturing of all children and youth.

d) Parents, mothers especially, meet today a wide range of new situations in their child-rearing job, and the problems related thereto tax heavily even the ablest.

e) Social conditions and pressures frequently preclude many parents from having enough resources to fulfill fully the obligations they have to children and society.

f) These lacking mothers and fathers should be aided rather than condemned or punished; and society, because of its own limitations and exactments, is obligated to supply to them that which is required in the way of teaching, helping, and healing service so that they, their children, and the community may profit.

g) Prevailing services in behalf of children and youth in conflict, which communities and the state supply, help invaluabley; but quantitative and qualitative shortages in these programs restrict

the aid given and cause many children and youth in trouble to stay unchanged.

h) Once the public is fully aware of the influential part it currently plays in causing juvenile delinquency of various kinds and degrees, community attitudes and practices regarding the problem may alter and result in better plans for the welfare of all concerned.

These assertions call for two additional comments. First, the plight we are in should not make us confirmed pessimists or near-sighted optimists. We should try to become meliorists, that is, persons who use shared intelligence, imagination, and energy to make conditions better, uncertain though the outcome may be. Although society may tend to become the sort that Huxley portrays in *Brave New World* or Orwell in *Nineteen-Eighty-four*, such fate may be our destiny but it need not be our goal. Second, those of us who serve children and youth should work even more diligently to see to it that the public tries harder to mitigate damages being done. Communities must furnish through adequate and competent agencies whatever aid is needed.

Community and persons should be helped to achieve optimums. In the case of a particular community limitation or an identified delinquent, more than superficial effort can and should be afforded. The big question is: Can this special help be given more certainly and wisely than current practices permit?

Confusion about the nature of delinquency and its proper handling require special notice and clearing up. Three statements that depict varying attitudes about its personal and social meaning today illustrate clearly the uncertainty facing those of us who work in this field, and they stress the importance, personally and socially, of our being sure of what it is we believe and want:

Are we to stand idly by while fierce young hoodlums—too often and too long harbored under the glossy misnomer of juvenile delinquents—roam our streets and desecrate our communities? If we do, America might well witness a resurgence of the brutal criminality and mobstrism of a past era. Gang-style ferocity—once the evil domain of hardened adult criminals—now centers chiefly in cliques of teenage brigands. Their individual and gang exploits rival the savagery of the veteran desperadoes of bygone days. Recent happen-

ings in juvenile crime shatter the illusion that softhearted mollicodding is the answer to this problem.¹

In the astonishing increase, then, of impulsive criminal and delinquent acts perpetrated by young individuals and gangs, I see, primarily perverse forms of what in psychoanalysis we call "turning passive into active." By this we mean that the human ego cannot stand more than a certain amount of passivity and of victimization. Normally, the play of children and the games, pranks, and sports of young people, as well as imagination and intellectual pursuits, provide safety valves even as they advance capabilities and opportunities that feed into identity formation. However, where capabilities are undernourished and opportunities questionable, the lag between childish play and adult act becomes unbearable: destructive prank becomes that vehicle of initiative, which, once employed, too often—and too late—proves to possess defective breaks.²

(21) To promote the general welfare, as our Constitution says, was one of the primary purposes for which we created this Nation. And the purpose of uniting to promote the general welfare was to achieve the greatest possible degree of security, happiness, freedom, and well-being for each individual.

In a living democracy there can be no separation between individual and social well being.

In these critical times we must be more alert than ever to express our conviction that social welfare programs do contribute positively and effectively to furthering individual well-being and general welfare. We do not need to persuade ourselves of this fact. But we have to spread confidence that it is so, as to make very clear to the public that the long-time emergency we are in requires the utmost in preserving and enhancing every human resource we have.³

Such divergent viewpoints raise practical issues. It is stressed again that, in our kind of society and with man endowed as he is with intelligence, imagination, and hope, inquiry and reconstruct-

¹ United States Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Go All Enforcement Officials" (Reprint from the FBI Law Enforcement *Bulletin*, February 1, 1957).

² Erik H. Erikson, "Ego Identity and the Psychosocial Moratorium," in Helen L. Witmer and Ruth Kotinsky, eds., *New Perspectives for Research on Juvenile Delinquency*, Children's Bureau Publication No. 356 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956), p. 16.

³ Martha M. Eliot, M.D., "Furthering Individual Well-Being through Social Welfare," *The Child*, XVII (1952), 19.

ing are consequential tools. We can come to grips with the major theses that these three pronouncements entail. We should agree, as far as possible, on the general course to be followed and what needs extending. Unless this is done, shadowboxing with this problem will increase. Even moderately paying surface-scratching jobs we now undertake will be less useful than they are now.

Another angle stands out in this question of perspectives. Public opinion and action are easily affected adversely when our own uncertainties and indefinite goals give wrong impressions. This affects public concern for troubled children and controls as well as the support, understanding, and enthusiasm that must go into all which the community is called upon to provide.

While citizens should not be given a set of absolutes that pertain to delinquency and its lessening, they as well as ourselves ought to have a workable frame of reference within which to debate, imagine, and decide. Somehow or other, we have failed to furnish this philosophical guide. Perhaps, this failure is due to our own lack of conviction, about which Dr. Eliot speaks in the paragraph quoted above. We must redetermine, individually and collectively, where we stand, what we are attempting, and which goals we seek. Our position on these matters relates closely to the ultimate welfare of children, nation, and each of us.

As indicated above, what is deeply believed and hoped for has great consequence. Despite the fact that many people look upon philosophical discussion as being remote and abstract, it plays, nevertheless, a leading role in community programs to lessen delinquency. A brief philosophy of juvenile delinquency is set forth for reflection and subsequent amending. Will Durant in *The Story of Philosophy* summarizes our need for such a philosophical base.

To observe processes and to construct means is science, to criticize and coordinate ends is philosophy; and because in these days our means and instruments have multiplied beyond our interpretation and synthesis of ideals and ends, our life is full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. For a fact is nothing except in relation to desire; it is not complete except in relation to a purpose and as a whole. Science without philosophy, facts without perspective and valuation, cannot save us from havoc and

despair. Science gives us knowledge, but only philosophy can give us wisdom.⁴

All this has much to do with what each one feels, does, and hopes about this problem. It influences what steps might be taken toward its interpretation and lessening. Why has this matter personal and social significance? Is its whole envisioned? What is its meaning to total society and social institutions? Does wisdom characterize the approaches conceived and the methods employed? Have we abiding beliefs regarding these issues?

The following creed is by no means perfect; and its modification is encouraged. It affords, however, a frame of reference that has value and everyday usefulness. If these beliefs were widely accepted and followed, that which is being done about juvenile delinquency could be improved. More energy would be spent to deal with lags, now commonly experienced, and to supply new services.

Crede

Delinquency is a disturbing but to-be-expected by-product of our kind of society.

Misconduct of children is mostly a passing but costly form of acting-out behavior; some of it has deepest emotional causes; delinquency has personal and legal meaning which communities should know and intelligently heed; and like physical sickness, there is no one cause nor prescription for it.

Delinquents are characterized by exaggerated poorness of one kind or several; such as, (1) poorness of family relationships and surroundings; (2) poorness of health (emotional, mental, physical); (3) poorness of satisfying and gainful experiences; (4) poorness of inner and outer controls; and (5) poorness of the helping services given.

Personal poorness makes interpersonal relationships difficult, instant, and meager; and this unsatisfactory condition often creates anxiety in children and youth which expresses itself either in striking-out or closing-in behavior that may result in delinquencies.

Primary social institutions—family, church, and school—are the bulwarks of society to prevent the development of juvenile delinquency in children, and these are, also, the best aids we have for the gradual correction of unsatisfactory patterns. Although family, church, and school are still influential with youth, the effect and usefulness of sec-

⁴ Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1926), p.3.

ondary social institutions will increase greatly at this age and stage. *At all times, how fathers and mothers love, plan, and act has paramount importance.*

Legally constituted authority in relation to violating children and youth must play a consequential community role, wherever and whenever behavior has moved or is moving out of bounds. (Efficient law enforcement officials supply an outer control where the inner controls of the child or youth are weak or need a strengthening influence. Sometimes they nip in the bud troubles that are starting; sometimes they correct dangerous neighborhood conditions; sometimes they detect situations that need referral for prompt professional service. They reinforce indirectly acceptable standards of personal and group living in children, youth, and families and fortify, by their presence and dignity, the place and value of authority in all personal and community behaving.)

Children and youth who violate established customs and law may require social assistance so that each may be helped to achieve that which means the most and best for himself and society. (Psychotherapy is afforded by specialists in this field, and this kind of professional diagnosis and treatment is sometimes necessary. Improvement of environment can itself affect a great deal of change of individual conduct in many.)

Specialized courts are in a distinctive position to protect the rights of children and youths who have special problems and to protect the rights of citizens; and they should provide for the professional treatment and rehabilitation of socially sick persons. (This is only possible when such courts have (1) the right kind of jurisdiction; (2) adequate and competent personnel; (3) availability of social agency help; and (4) proper amount of citizen understanding, good will, and financial support. Without these, only limited results can be expected. Courts can discipline in a consequential manner, not for the purpose of punishing but for the purpose of developing emotional strengths and correcting unacceptable conduct patterns.)

In situations where the placement of a boy or girl in a state training school is deemed necessary and legally decided upon, therapy there should accomplish what the probationary supervision of court officers cannot supply. (Institutional commitment of a youth obliges him or her to live temporarily in a restricted environment and should supply all the teaching, helping, and healing services needed for social restoration.)

Three underlying aspects of juvenile delinquency and its lessening need constant emphasis; and if these are adequately dealt with, juvenile delinquency could decrease.

a) Our personal and collective values and goals as adults, citizens, officials, parents, create a kind of community climate in which either juvenile decency or juvenile delinquency can thrive.

b) No one person or body can approach widely varying social sickness alone. The team approach is essential and only by integrated thinking and working can the behavior of children and youth be understood and modified.

c) All the persons and all the voluntary and official agencies connected with delinquency treatment and prevention need to take account of their excellences and weaknesses periodically so as to make sure that what is undertaken in behalf of children in trouble shall be the best possible and count for the most.

Because of this philosophy, or one like it, important progress nationally has been made. These elementary beliefs are foundation stones on which much social building has been achieved. If these beliefs about delinquency were strengthened and augmented, and their acceptance extended, the next decade could hold even greater promise.

Full report of advances in the juvenile delinquency field or even their listing is not attempted. Wiser attack today is due to growing concern and greater understanding. There is constant search for more satisfactory explanations and methods. The intent is to tie closely together all that is happening. Out of the multitude of constructive things being done to combat delinquency on this improved basis, six examples are selected for illustration. These are chosen because they touch broad aspects of the challenge. Each of these innovations is the forerunner of much that is still to happen. They show the direction that community action is likely to take.

1. *Protective services.*—Social service agencies look upon their responsibility and opportunity to give protective service in more encouraging light. Still safeguarding the dignity and rights of individuals and still holding to the principles of social work practice, many of them are eager to have their workers offer this difficult but productive help. This desire mounts because: (1) need for special help of this nature has been well established; (2) its usefulness has been demonstrated; (3) particular skills it calls for are more

commonly taught and better learned; (4) availability of agencies and staffs specializing in this field is greater.

Early handling of the sociological and psychological disturbances of children and youth guarantees better results than belated attention. Behavior situations presented are apt to be less complicated. The likelihood that what is done will encompass the needs of families is enhanced. Family-centered rehabilitation today takes on new meaning in all social work process and its value to children in conflict is more and more recognized. Waiting for overt breakdowns or violations is known to be personally and socially devastating. Onset of trouble can now be acted upon instead of waiting for advanced stages.

Across the nation one finds demonstrations of this protective nature successfully under way. These show in both specialized and unspecialized settings. Social workers are evolving acceptable ways and means to assist hard-to-reach persons and families who seem hesitant to seek help and those who refuse it. They grow less dubious about the professional use of authority, provided it is well directed and appropriately utilized. More understanding of the dynamics of human behavior lets workers know psychological reasons why certain children and adults require it. They learn, too, how best to offer this kind of help.

These changed attitudes about the place of authority in delinquency prevention and treatment are encouraging developments. Because of them, sound community welfare planning calls increasingly for protective services of casework nature. It also insists that these services be well supported, and that the public understand them. The record shows how frequently strong protective services give answers that no other plan can. Protection against delinquency has many characteristics of the public health field. What is now done to safeguard physical health is being more generally applied to juvenile delinquency.

2. *Law Enforcement measures.*—Enthusiastic establishment of a National Juvenile Police Officers' Association symbolizes well what is happening regarding better total care for juvenile offenders. It is clear-cut evidence of the growing importance of the law

enforcement aspect of the delinquency problem. Fortunately, there is now an influential organization that is directly concerned with operating standards, and boundaries of responsibility and help to be given.

Juvenile police bureaus, juvenile divisions within the sheriff's office, and the assignment of special officers to juvenile law enforcement where numbers do not permit a separate department are currently reported in all parts of the country. This first contact that violating children and youth have with law enforcement officials can have much effect. It often determines individual reactions and the outcome of the experience of children and youth with outside authority.

Many leaders hold what the law enforcement service uniquely affords to be the first line of community defense against delinquency. They hope for the time when more police officers and deputies of the sheriff's office will be in a better position to deal substantially with children and youth who are arrested or are subject to arrest. If these officials realized more the part they can play in this matter and were guided to do more satisfactory jobs, real delinquency in their communities would decline, so consequential is this initial relationship.

In communities where better law enforcement service has been provided, favorable changes are noted. These show in lessened jail placement; in more determination that suitable detention home facilities be supplied; and in the number and kinds of children and youth apprehended. Also, these results show in how arrested children feel and respond. One wishes the new Juvenile Police Officers' Association great success. It is a development that holds much for children's welfare. This will be so, only if those of us concerned about children in conflict envision the far-reaching potentiality that this movement has. We must give it backing and assistance so as to make what it contributes truly count in this fight.

3. *Child guidance facilities.*—Improvements of this nature are seen and felt everywhere. This extension is due partly to what clinics, established earlier, have been able to accomplish and demonstrate. It is due, too, to the boost given this activity by

financial help and professional leadership now afforded to American communities because the National Mental Health Law of 1946 was enacted. Clinical facilities have been expanding in phenomenal manner.

The impact of these programs on case handling shows itself in strengthened diagnosis and treatment plans. Consultation service is more available and used. Personnel training, research, and public education regarding individual behavior move steadily ahead. Less ignorance and arrogance are evidenced on the part of those concerned with the welfare of children and youth in trouble, and children and youth generally. For this reason, more delinquent children and youth are being understood and more successfully guided today than formerly. What is undertaken today in their behalf can depend upon scientific knowledge and determination rather than guesswork and scant social investigation. Individual cases are being more competently treated; agency and community thinking and doing gradually change. Rehabilitation takes on altered meaning, intent, and expectation.

Moreover, these clinics spread useful knowledge about what must go into all healthy growth and development. Professional workers and bodies, disciplines, and citizens feel this contribution. In the long run, this better understanding may pay a very high reward. Juvenile decency rather than lessened juvenile delinquency is a sound social directive.

4. *State systems of specialized courts and youth correction authorities.*—Effort countrywide in these two related directions has brought significant steps forward. Whether it is the Connecticut court plan, the Utah plan, the North Carolina proposal, or some other which is studied, one finds in it rich potentials and crystalized public desire to extend and improve judicial services for children in trouble. Whether it is the results of the California Youth Correction Authority, the Texas Youth Development Council, the Minnesota Youth Board, or other such administrative agency that are examined, much is found which proves that better treatment can be arranged, surer coverage given, and measurable gains attained. The purpose here is not to describe details of these new approaches. It is rather to point out that salient activity of

this dynamic nature is mounting. This advance is likely to bring hopeful changes in the delinquency field. This will be so, if these ideas are sufficiently safeguarded and extended. Such programs could replace many shadowboxing practices. They already show favorable results.

5. *Youth commissions.*—Many examples of progress being made this way could be offered; but only one is mentioned. It pertains to the commission that the writer knows best, because he has been a member of it from the start and is acquainted intimately with its aims and achievements. Recently its executive secretary reported:

The Louisiana Youth Commission is presently operating on a budget of approximately \$34,000 per year. Funds are appropriated by the legislature to the Commission, which is a permanent agency of State Government. The Commission does not have any administrative program, operating entirely in the areas of consultation, study and recommendation.

We are happy that we have been able to effect changes in the way youthful offenders are handled in our State along with our other activities. This has been accomplished by many various means including direct legislation, recommendations from the Commission, working with citizens' groups, both on a state level and with local communities. Some of the changes that have occurred in our State, due to the operations of the Commission are:

1. More awareness on the part of citizens, public officials and citizen groups, not only of the problems of youthful offenders but of the need for development of facilities and services, both in the area of prevention and correction;
2. Development of better programs in the juvenile correctional schools with increased emphasis being placed on professional staff and psychiatric and psychological services;
3. Providing juvenile correctional school care for delinquent colored girls;
4. Development of a statewide juvenile probation service, available to the courts upon request, through the State Department of Public Welfare;
5. Development of the Louisiana Conference of Juvenile Correctional Workers which is an organization composed of various groups working in the correctional field. This Conference not only serves as a medium for additional professional stimulation but as an educational medium for its members;

6. Development of specialized juvenile police divisions in many communities in the State;

7. Developing juvenile detention facilities in communities of the State and working on plans for a State system of juvenile detention, probably on a regional basis;

8. Working with the State Bar Association and youth groups in the development of a State system of specialized courts which will be able to give more intense and comprehensive service to youthful offenders;

9. Development of Public consciousness for the need of a specialized institution service for older offending youth.

These are a few things we have been able to accomplish in a period of approximately seven years, and operating on a very small budget. Certainly, in our opinion, there has been considerable advancement made—not only in the way youthful offenders are handled in Louisiana, but in the acceptance by citizens and public officials of the basic concepts and needs for specialized services of a rehabilitative nature for youthful offenders.

This statement is revealing and propitious. It indicates what such commissions affect with little financial outlay when there is vision and persistence. Something similar could come about in every state, and national juvenile delinquency be dealt more telling blows.

6. *Federal aid.*—Concern and action of Congress these recent years about American children and youth in conflict have been shown in a number of ways. What congressional investigating committees have found in this field is widely known and discussed. At the time this paper is being written, important bills are being considered in Congress that relate directly to this issue. Unless nearsighted economy intervenes, they will be enacted in as much as they have much public backing and the interest of the President. This legislation makes financial provision for new developments countrywide. Personnel recruitment and training, community organization, research, and other such matters will then have new impetus and support.

Parenthetically, it should be pointed out how fortunate we are, as citizens and workers, and how fortunate American children and youth are, that the United States Children's Bureau is now prepared and eager to give leadership and counsel in this particular direction. Its staff stands ready to spearhead and activate whatever

(30)

Congress and citizens wish undertaken in the juvenile delinquency field. Coupled with what the National Probation and Parole Association is doing and backed up with more understanding and effort in local communities, there can be a strong united front. This ought to constitute a social force of great moment in this struggle against a powerful adversary.

33 Seven hypotheses conclude this paper. Taken together, they recapitulate what has been said and emphasized. Taken alone, each concentrates on a single aspect of our multinatured challenge. The particular area with which each hypothesis deals is a likely spot to begin influential attack. Hypothetico-deductive approach to problem-solving has scientific validity and great social use.

1. If citizens and workers fail to appreciate what underlies juvenile delinquency and remain static in their thinking and doing about this issue, juvenile delinquency problems of this nation seem bound to mount in cost and influence.

2. If more fathers, mothers, and teachers were inspired and helped to understand the dynamics of children's growing and developing and to do better relating with them and grow less anxious, the likelihood of delinquencies decreasing would be enhanced; and if adults imparted satisfactorily to children and youth (1) the importance of their knowing social bounds, (2) the need of discipline, and (3) why becoming responsible persons pays good personal and social dividends, acceptable behavior patterns in more children and youth would be established and fortified.

3. If personnel in the field of preventing and correcting juvenile delinquency were both adequate and competent to meet current demands, social services now given would count more, singly and corporatively; this would afford public support and confidence of generous, constant, and hopeful nature instead of the uncertain kind now commonly evidenced.

4. If greater public attention and official effort were directed to establishing and maintaining statewide systems of high-standard specialized courts and unified plans for appropriate treatment after adjudication, this new coverage could be productive, closing gaps and stopping limitations.

5. If state and local departments of government that have con-

cern and obligation for youth welfare worked more closely and intelligently together, and if workers in the healing, teaching, and helping agencies of the community fused rather than splintered their energy expenditure, teamwork would move problem-solving substantially ahead and show results that disintegration fails to achieve.

6. If more salient research regarding delinquency were fostered, correlated, and supported, and if more experimental projects were wisely carried through and evaluated, still newer light on its prevention and treatment would afford better insight and outlook.

7. If each of us put extra quality and quantity into what we daily think, do, and hope, children and youth would be served more effectively than now. We would affect community attitudes and organization, on which all that is wanted and tried largely depends. If what comes from particularly good performance were added together, it could eventually change the national juvenile delinquency picture.

The United States has the know-how, resources, and ideology to control juvenile delinquency. Improved ways and means have been developed for battling it. Much depends upon how ably each person does his distinctive part. The common enemy remains a formidable one; our shadowboxing avails little. This kind of fighting must gradually be replaced by more public understanding, increased professional skills, and greater courage.

A Sensible Approach to a Community Fee Policy

by *BLANCHE BERNSTEIN*

17 **A**S AN ECONOMIST BY TRAINING, I am concerned with the allocation of resources so as to achieve maximum benefit to the community. Further, much of the work I have done in the last twelve years, whether as budget and research director in large welfare organizations, or as a program planner in the Mutual Security Agency, has involved the allocation of funds, insufficient to meet all the needs, to those programs which appeared most urgent. Without doubt, my views about present fee-charging policies and practices and what constitutes a sensible policy for social agencies are colored by this training and experience.

17 We are all aware that social agencies, whether casework, group work and recreation, or psychiatric clinics, are no longer serving just the indigent or the marginal-income families but a broader section of the community. This is why the whole question of fees arises. We have perhaps exaggerated notions of just how far social agencies have gone in broadening the market for their services. In New York we found that among the major family casework agencies for which data were available, three quarters of the clients in 1955 had incomes below \$4,000; families or individuals with annual income over \$6,000 accounted for less than 7 percent of the clients. Similarly, among those psychiatric clinics in New York which reported the income distribution of their patients, a little more than three fifths of the clientele were from families receiving public assistance or with annual incomes of less than \$4,000. Most children in placement are also from low-income families. Many applicants to adoption agencies, however, are in the middle- or

upper-income level. The bulk of social agency clientele appears still to be concentrated in the low-income group. It is true, nevertheless, that agencies are serving a broader section of the community than was the case twenty years ago and that an increasing proportion are from middle- and upper-middle-income groups.

A study published in June, 1957, by the Community Council's Research Department, entitled *Social Welfare Expenditures and Their Financing: New York City*, showed that client payments constituted an important source of income to many voluntary agencies. For example, fees from clients provided 16 percent of the income of visiting nurse services, 19.5 percent of day care agencies, and 34 percent of independent mental health clinics for adults. Fees are not too significant, however, among hospital or social agency psychiatric clinics. In contrast, among the family casework agencies in New York which charge for their services to some clients, fees are only 4 percent of expenditures—in one agency, however, fees were 13 percent of expenditures. These differences do not, by and large, reflect differences in income groups served. Rather they reflect different fee policies and the level of fees charged.

More important than the present significance of fees is the potentiality for the future. Real per capita disposable income has risen substantially, increasing by almost 50 percent from 1940 to 1955. In more recent years, the rate of increase has diminished; still, from 1950 to 1955, per capita disposable income rose by about 8 percent. Barring another major war or other unforeseen catastrophes, and assuming that technological developments proceed apace and result, as in the past, in increasing productivity, we may look forward to a more or less continuous rise in real per capita incomes. More people will be financially able to make some payment toward the cost of services obtained from voluntary agencies.

Now, why is all of this of any importance? Briefly, although it is true that money cannot buy everything, it can buy quite a lot of things—useful things, too, such as caseworkers, supervisors, and psychiatrists. With more money you can provide more social services. In canvassing the various possible sources of income to provide for an expansion of services we are, it seems to me, under

an obligation to determine what we can reasonably expect the users of the service to pay.

In describing present fee-charging policies and practices among voluntary social agencies, I shall rely mainly on three studies we have completed in New York City relating to family casework and homemaker services; psychiatric outpatient clinics; and child placement, adoption, and maternity care. (From what I have read and heard, it appears that conditions in New York are, for once, not unlike those in the rest of the country.)

Out of twenty New York agencies, among those which provide casework services, only seven, serving about 40 percent of the clients, charge fees of some of their clients. The remainder, mainly church-affiliated organizations and the Red Cross, will serve anyone, no matter what his income, without charge.

As a result of different policies and practices, families whose size, composition, and financial status are identical may be given service free or be charged widely varying fees, depending on where the family goes for service. For example, a family of four with an annual income of \$6,000 may obtain casework free or pay from \$1 to \$6 per interview. A family with an income of \$10,000 also may be served free or pay from \$3 to \$15 per interview.

Ability to pay is measured by a family budget standard, but not all agencies use the same standard. Further, only four of the seven which charge fees have established definite formulas for determining the proportion of the surplus, or the amount in excess of the sum needed to meet the standard, available for the payment of fees, and these proportions vary. Agency practice differs also in respect to the treatment of such resources as cash in the bank, stocks and bonds, and so on.

Significant variations in important administrative procedures are also found among agencies which charge fees. The most important is that some agencies accept the client's unverified statement as to income and financial obligations. Two agencies, and these have a high proportion of clients in the fee-paying group, have established verification procedures.

The pattern we found in our study of psychiatric outpatient clinics duplicates in most respects the one I have just described.

In some respects, the situation is even more chaotic. Fees for the same type of service for families in similar economic circumstances vary widely; fee scales bear no consistent relationship to ability to pay; and ability to pay is not measured by a family budget standard or any other objective device. The definition of income varies from clinic to clinic. Some take account of savings, most do not. With few exceptions, maximum fees on the graduated scales in use are completely unrelated to costs of service.

There is one more feature of present practices which requires comment. Although some types of income, and frequently all kinds of resources, are ignored in determining ability to pay, the widest possible range of deductions is permitted. These include not only such major items as heavy medical expenses and support of relatives outside the home, but carfare above 30 cents a day, private schools and dancing classes, union dues, work clothes, and, of course, rentals in excess of the average. Even such types of savings as payments to retirement funds and for life insurance may be deducted from income before calculating ability to pay.

In attempting to determine why this situation exists I must rely on my impressions based on some rather intensive experiences in working with various groups on the problem during the last year or so.

A simple explanation for the variation found in any single community is that lacking any machinery for working out policies in an organized fashion, agencies tended to develop policies and practices based on their own experience, knowledge, and judgment, and thus were bound to end up with substantial variation. Lack of machinery for coordination is only a partial explanation, for even when the facts are brought out and the machinery for developing a community-wide policy is available, the agencies in any particular field of service may evidence no interest in pursuing the matter, as was true of the casework agencies in New York. Further explanation has to be sought elsewhere.

When the facts about fee-charging practices among psychiatric outpatient clinics in New York City were made available, a large and representative group of clinics agreed that all was not well. They requested the Council to appoint a technical committee of

representatives of various types of clinics which would develop a set of recommendations with respect to fee-charging for the guidance of the clinics. Such a committee was established, and a number of Council staff, including myself, have been working with it. As an economist working with social workers and psychiatrists, I had a rough time of it but I gained some insight into the factors which have prevented the establishment of a reasonable fee policy and, at the end of a series of meetings held over a period of almost a year, we reached a substantial measure of agreement.

The factors which obstruct a sensible fee policy appear to me to be these: First, it is feared that the charging of fees which approximate the client's economic ability to pay, or perhaps any fee, will discourage him from seeking or continuing casework or psychiatric service. Second, the client's spending and saving pattern is so inflexible that every individual variation must be taken into account or the client will suffer additional traumas. Third, savings, whether in retirement funds, life insurance, owned homes, stocks and bonds, or sometimes even cash in the bank, are sacrosanct and not to be touched until the age of sixty-five. Finally, voluntary agencies, sovereign in their own bailiwicks, are often reluctant to submit their policies to community-wide scrutiny and to community-wide decision. Then there are a number of other kinds of reasons: acceptance of fees may adversely affect the volume of contributions; fee-charging is not appropriate to a philanthropic organization; it may influence the assignment of the more skilled caseworkers to fee-paying cases to the detriment of non-fee clients, etc.

Granting that it takes more than facts to convince people, I should like to present a few facts which bear on the obstacles I have listed to a sensible policy. With respect to the notion that charging fees may discourage clients, I would point out: (1) in New York City the agencies which have the highest fee scales and the most detailed procedures for verifying income also have the longest waiting list; (2) many emotionally disturbed people of modest means go to private psychiatrists, knowing quite well that they will pay from \$15 to \$25 per session; and (3) even if some potential clients are lost, it should make very little difference in view of the

fact that most casework agencies and psychiatric clinics have long waiting lists.

With respect to the notion that family spending patterns are inflexible, I would suggest that this is simply not so in the United States. In the first place, most people's incomes change from year to year. Federal Reserve Board data applicable to 1948 indicated that 39 percent of the families had larger incomes that year than in the preceding year and 25 percent of the families had smaller incomes. Only 36 percent of all families had the same income in two successive years. I am sure that both those whose incomes increased and those whose incomes decreased, shifted, in some manner, their spending or saving pattern. Furthermore, even without a change in income, people change their spending habits in relation to what is offered in the market. They may spend less for clothing because they want a television set. They will save more and spend less in response to patriotic appeals as they did in wartime.

Now, as to the sanctity of savings, the tradition in this country is that savings are for a rainy day and that can be any number of things—unemployment, illness, birth of a child, the cost of a college education—as well as old age. Actually, people also use their savings for sunny days; they may save for a vacation in Europe. I can see no good reason why they should not or would not use some portion of their savings, if necessary, for treatment of emotional disturbances.

If we omit savings from our calculation of economic ability to pay we are omitting some substantial resources. Federal Reserve Board data applicable to 1950 indicate that among families with annual incomes, before taxes, of \$5,000 to \$7,500, 23 percent had a net worth of \$1,000 to \$5,000; 51 percent had \$5,000 to \$25,000; and 14 percent had \$25,000 or more. Middle-income families tend to keep their savings in retirement funds, life insurance, and owned homes. These are sometimes referred to as "contractual savings" because the family or wage earner is committed to some regular payroll deduction for a retirement fund or engages to make payments at stated intervals on life insurance or on the mortgage. Such savings,

however, are not different in their nature from money deposited in a savings bank at irregular intervals or invested occasionally in stocks and bonds. One can borrow on them and use the funds at will and yet maintain ownership of the asset if it is a home or continue the protection offered by a life insurance policy.

What, then, is a sensible approach to a community fee policy? I offer the following ten-point program:

1. There ought to be a community-wide policy. The present multiplicity of practices is confusing to the clients, inequitable, and an irresponsible approach to the use of community funds. A community-wide policy does involve some loss of the sovereign rights of the individual agency, but such loss is inherent in a democratically organized society where decisions affecting the community are determined by a majority vote. It makes as little sense for each organization to develop its own fee-charging policy irrespective of what other agencies are doing, as for each district office in any single organization to exercise independent authority, or for each individual caseworker in each district office to do so.

2. If philanthropically supported agencies are going to continue to serve the middle- and upper-middle-income groups, fees should be charged in accordance with ability to pay. I propose this so that public and philanthropic funds can be conserved for those least able to pay all or part of the cost of care, and to enlarge the total financial resources available to the social agency to permit it to increase its total volume of service. Implicit in what I have just said is the need for a graduated fee scale. I do not oppose a flat fee designed to cover all or most of an agency's costs. An agency establishing a fairly high flat fee will develop a market among people who, by and large, can afford the fee. Agencies which plan to serve a broad segment of the community, however, ranging from those with submarginal incomes to the well-to-do, cannot institute a flat fee without either imposing a heavy burden on those toward the lower end of the scale or providing a heavily subsidized service to those who can afford to pay more for it.

3. Philanthropic agencies should serve without charge those who are financially unable to pay. These are indeed the very people for whom philanthropic services were designed; yet we

find some agencies charging families with incomes well below \$4,000 per year as much as \$1.50 per interview. Now, I am aware of the arguments about the therapeutic value of fees, but little evidence is available to support the argument. I think we ought to try to nail this down by adequate studies. If there is, indeed, therapeutic value in charging a fee, perhaps a very small fee would provide it. But charging a fee of the lowest income group has no economic justification while we are still giving heavily subsidized services to the middle-income groups.

4. Ability to pay should be judged in accordance with a scientifically developed family budget standard adjusted to family size and composition, designed to provide a modest but adequate level of living. I refer to the type of standard represented by the City Worker's Budget and by the Family Budget Standard prepared by the Council's Budget Standard Service which is built on, and brings up to date, the City Worker's Budget.

5. We need a common definition of income. All kinds of income, whether from earnings, property, pensions, interest, or dividends, should be included.

6. We need to take account of the total economic resources of the family, whether these are cash in the bank, stocks and bonds, loan value of retirement funds, loan value of insurance, or current equity in real estate. The technique for handling this can be fairly simple, i.e., something like one percent of total resources can be added to income in judging ability to pay a weekly fee. Some deductions from total resources should be made to allow a minimum reserve for the family, and, if possible, the size of the reserve should be related to the age of the head of the family. I might add that at the Council we are developing some material to show the amount of savings needed at various age levels to provide sufficient income for a modest but adequate level of living at retirement, taking account of Old Age and Survivors Insurance benefits and other retirement plans.

7. We ought to give up the hand-tailoring involved in the dozens of different types of deductions from income which may be allowed. There is a much simpler way of treating this which I shall come to, but basically we ought to stop worrying about the

client's ability to adjust himself to some new expense and we ought to stop using philanthropic funds to subsidize expenditures each family happens to consider important to it. I suggest that if, in addition to taxes, we allowed rent as paid, extraordinary medical expenses, and support of a relative outside the home, we could ignore other variations in family spending habits. Certainly we ought not concern ourselves with whether Junior is taking violin lessons or not, or whether the family feels that its child must go to a private school.

8. Having determined total income and resources and the types of deductions noted above, the agency could, theoretically, take 100 percent of whatever surplus is left. Most of us, however, would find this both harsh and unrealistic. It also would remove the flexibility which I promised when I suggested that we eliminate most types of deductions. In our work in the Budget Standard Service and with the committee which is developing some guiding principles for psychiatric clinics, we have come to at least a tentative conclusion that we should take about 20 percent-25 percent of the surplus at the lower levels and gradually raise this to a maximum of 50 percent as the income available for payment of fee rises. As an example of what this might mean, we estimate that a family of four with an income of \$6,240 a year would pay a weekly fee of \$2.50; a family with an income of about \$8,000 might pay around \$5.50 per week; and a family with an income of \$10,400 might pay about \$15.

We have adopted the principle of the graduated proportion of surplus as being in line with progressive taxation as expressed in the Federal income tax laws, i.e., at higher levels of income, one should pay higher rates of taxes.

9. The maximum fee charged on the graduated scale should not exceed the cost of the service. The opposite policy seems unreasonable to me in that it requires the person who needs case-work or psychiatric service to make a philanthropic contribution over and above the fee.

10. Some simple procedures for verifying income should be established. Most social workers have a prejudice against doing this, but I ask you to consider what would happen if the Federal

Government did not have a system for checking income tax returns. How accurate do you think they would then be? Do you think the result would be more equity or less equity?

The proposals I have made may seem very complicated to administer. I think actually administration could be made relatively easy. The Council's Budget Standard Service will publish in August, 1957, a "how-to-do-it" manual. Its more formal title is *How to Measure Ability to Pay for Social and Health Agency Services*. It incorporates most of the notions I have expressed although we differ in some details. One clinic in Westchester which just began operations this year has used our system and found it most helpful. But whether easy or not, only if we approach the problem in some such manner will we reduce the present multiplicity of fee-charging practices, eliminate the confusion which arises from them, provide more equitable treatment to all clients seeking service, and obtain more funds to expand necessary social services.

What Is a Social Worker Worth?

by *ELWOOD V. DENTON*

ARE SOCIAL WORKERS adequately paid? That is undoubtedly the most compelling question confronting social agencies across the nation as they plan their community services.

Standing against demands of the community for social welfare services are the limitations of budget and staff, and frustration results. Those who seek agency services, be they the services of tax-supported agencies or those of agencies drawing financial support from endowments, membership fees, or fund drives, raise the question, "Why can't my problem receive more personal attention?" Agency executives ask, "How can so many needs be met by so small a staff?" Board members and county commissioners alike inquire, "Why is there so large a turnover among the staff?" Budget committeemen are perplexed, "How can we be certain these salaries we have set are fair to our people and to our agency?" Staff members themselves wonder, "What's wrong with social work as a career?" Deans and professors in social welfare schools are puzzled, "Why aren't more young people attracted to our profession?"

To all these questions there seems to be a single, obvious answer. Salaries paid by social welfare agencies are not attractive.

What, then, is an adequate salary for a social worker?

39 In November of 1956 a study was completed which answers that question, so far as caseworkers in Cleveland are concerned. Those who had a part in that project believe the Cleveland study provides an approach to this basic problem and gives some results which have application in other community situations.

The study was made by the Case Work Council of the Welfare Federation of Cleveland. It was financed by a generous grant from

the Cleveland Foundation, the oldest and largest community trust in America, and by an appropriation of the Case Work Council from its own funds. It commanded the attention and time of a volunteer committee, Council executives, and a group of professional social workers from member agencies for the better part of a year, assisted by two management consultants.

Directing the project was the Case Work Council's Personnel Practices Committee. Immediately responsible for the detail of the study was an advisory group consisting of personnel men from business and industry and individuals representing the major fields of casework service. Working with them were John Patterson Currie, management consultant from New York City, and his associate, James D. Moore, of Chicago. The study adapted two industrial management techniques to the social welfare field—job evaluation and salary surveys. (4)

What is job evaluation? All of us evaluate jobs. We form impressions as to the worth of the job at which we work, of the jobs our associates have and of those of our friends. Job evaluation is simply the systematic approach. It is the use of critical judgment to ascertain from an objective description of the work that constitutes a job the worth of that job in relation to others in the same organization. Job evaluation focuses attention on the work detail of a job rather than on the worker. It deals with relative values rather than absolute values in determining job difficulty and importance.

Salary surveys extend the range of job comparisons. They obtain information on rates paid by other employers in the same line of business or in the same community for jobs of comparable content and difficulty. Thus they provide the means of verifying internal relationships and the basis for establishing a salary structure which has the desired relationship to the pay scales of other employers.

The systematic approach of job analysis and evaluation and area salary surveys recommended them to the Cleveland project. Behind it is a community that has given most generously to the fund drives which support many of the social agencies and voted tax levies to provide welfare services. Professional men and top-level executives from the city's business and industry direct these

money-raising campaigns and sit as members on the boards of numerous agencies. Many companies encourage the active participation of their management specialists in the affairs of welfare agencies, giving them considerable time to contribute their technical skills and judgment, thus assuring to the community generally more efficient administration by industrial management standards.

Job evaluation and salary surveys were well known to these volunteers from industry, and their adaptation to a new field was logical and feasible.

For a year prior to the job evaluation project, at the request of executives of member agencies of the Case Work Council, an enlarging group of personnel men from Cleveland business concerns had conducted a series of conferences at which the whole range of personnel administration techniques and procedures was discussed. In these sessions, industry representatives gained familiarity with personnel problems in social agencies, and agency executives became conversant with personnel programs and practices. Out of the meetings developed the sense of mutual respect and understanding which resulted in the suggestion for the job evaluation project.

Even before this, however, executives of agencies in the Case Work Council had become acquainted with the uses of salary survey data. Since 1953, the man who for many years directed the clerical rate study for the largest public utility company in Cleveland has worked with the Council's executive secretaries in advising member agencies of clerical salary levels in the community and suggesting rate ranges for clerical jobs in the agencies. No systematic evaluation of the clerical jobs was made, but the belief that agency clerical salaries should be comparable to—"competitive with" might be a more apt phrase—salaries paid by other employers of clerical labor had been instilled. This thinking and experience helped mold the job evaluation project.

Recognizing the most pressing problem of agency administration to be that of recruiting and retaining competent professional personnel, and mindful that time and funds available were not unlimited, the decision was made to focus attention on that area.

The study was to include only those casework jobs the primary function of which is direct casework service to clients, and it was to have two objectives.

The first objective was the systematic analysis and evaluation of the content of the nonsupervisory casework jobs in member agencies of the Case Work Council. The second objective was the systematic comparison of these jobs with jobs in Cleveland businesses and industries to ascertain appropriate rates for the social welfare jobs. One purpose was the correction of intra-agency and intra-Council inequities, so far as possible, and the other was the realistic pricing of casework jobs as compared with other jobs of similar difficulty and importance in the community which the member agencies serve and of which they are a part.

"Participation" had two meanings in the Cleveland job evaluation project.

In one sense of the word, thirty-five member agencies of the Case Work Council—all of the member agencies which employ caseworkers—took part in the project. Included were twelve Community Fund-supported agencies, ten hospital social service departments, both voluntary and tax-supported institutions, nine tax-supported agencies, two agencies receiving allocations through the Jewish Community Federation, and two agencies supported through independent fund drives and endowments. These agencies, at the time the study was made, employed 608 people in direct casework service to clients.

In the other sense of the word "participate," all of these individuals whose jobs were under analysis and evaluation were made to feel that they had a share in the project. They were informed by the consultants of what job evaluation is—and what it is not. Detailed information about the tasks they perform and the responsibilities they are required to assume was obtained from each individual in a nine-page questionnaire, and about one out of every six incumbents was also interviewed by the consultants.

Perhaps even more important was the membership of the job evaluation committee itself. Of its twelve members, four were volunteers from industry, men who together had long years of experience in personnel administration devising, installing, and

33

supervising job evaluation programs and originating, developing, and directing community salary surveys. The majority of the evaluation committee—eight members—were representatives of major specialties within the social work profession. These people work at jobs which were included in the study, and there is evidence it was reassuring to all concerned that the rating of jobs would incorporate the judgments of social workers well known to everyone, who are worthy of utmost confidence, and who, in this job study, would consider objectively the opinions and interests of all job incumbents. Because job evaluation is not primarily concerned with the size of the pie but rather with how the pie is cut, this sense of participation by those whose jobs are being evaluated is wholly desirable, even essential to success of the project.

The evaluation committee of twelve was the key group in the Cleveland project, as it is in any job evaluation study. Its members, who brought together broad knowledge of social welfare work and great familiarity with job evaluation techniques and who were thoroughly schooled by the consultants, made more judgments about more aspects of the jobs in member agencies of Cleveland's Case Work Council than had ever been made before. They, or any group with similar experience, are equipped to evaluate all jobs constituting the social work field. This point is commended to the attention of those who contemplate a job evaluation project similar to the one in Cleveland.

Equally important, in the minds of those who regularly deal in job evaluation, as the sense of participation in the study by those whose jobs are under review is their belief that the results will be fair and equitable. Each of them wants assurance that the things he considers important about his job are taken into account in its evaluation.

There is universal agreement that the salary for a job pays the incumbent—any incumbent—for certain amounts of knowledge and experience, for assuming certain responsibilities, and for working under certain conditions. These are the job factors in job evaluation. Different jobs have varying degrees of these factors that are distinguishably different one from another. It is on

that basis that the multitude of judgments about the various components of jobs which is job evaluation are made.

In the Cleveland job study the evaluation committee determined nine factors to be basic characteristics of casework jobs—the professional social work jobs. Agency executives and job incumbents agreed that these are the significant job factors:

1. Technical and professional knowledge
2. Supplementary experience and training
3. Analytical requirements
4. Responsibility for decision and for action
5. Contacts—public and internal
6. Supervision exercised (here it should be added that the concept was that of instruction and counseling of junior staff instead of directing actual job tasks of others)
7. Responsibility for records and reports
8. Working conditions
9. Client relationships (which were judged as important to this professional level of job as any factor used in the evaluation).

Out of the information supplied by 608 incumbents, the committee, assisted by the consultants, ascertained that nineteen distinguishably different jobs existed in the thirty-five member agencies. They encompassed a wide range of technical knowledge, experience, and responsibility, but the relative differences between many were so small that after evaluation they grouped themselves into nine classes. Hence, for salary administration purposes nine pay grades were considered to exist.

A prime objective of the Cleveland job evaluation project was to compare salaries paid caseworkers with those paid Cleveland businesses and industries, if such a thing were possible.

The survey was pioneering. Nowhere had such a project been undertaken before. It encompassed high-rated professional jobs. They are at a level at which jobs are not so similar from one organization to another as are jobs requiring only the basic work skills.

Nevertheless, with the assistance of a sizable group of industrial personnel men, six casework jobs, thought by the advisers to be similar to jobs in business concerns, were selected for sur-

vey purposes. Their description and specifications were circulated to a large number of Cleveland companies, the managements of which had, over the years, evidenced interest in affairs of the Welfare Federation of Cleveland.

Twenty-nine firms found jobs in their organizations which were accepted by the project evaluation committee as comparable in content, relative difficulty and importance, and in requirements for incumbency to the six selected casework jobs; 479 individual pay rates were reported by survey participants.

Discrepancies between salaries paid for higher rated social work and industrial jobs were immediately apparent when the Cleveland survey results were summarized. Noteworthy was the greater differential in financial recognition of the acquirement of advanced knowledge, skills, and responsibilities in industry than is found in the social welfare field.

44
Average salaries paid on the selected casework jobs were found to be from 2 percent to 49 percent lower than the weighted average salaries reported on the comparable jobs in business and industry. The greatest discrepancies were those between the two casework jobs which require a minimum of two years of graduate school training and their industrial counterparts. The core professional social work jobs were markedly underpaid by industrial standards.

These are the findings of the community salary survey made in Cleveland in late July, 1956. They do not portray the situation there today, and it would be presumptuous to infer that they are representative of conditions that have existed or now prevail in other community situations. However, they probably are indicative of the financial disadvantage at which the professional social worker finds himself in many communities.

On the other hand, a word of caution must be spoken about salary surveys, particularly those which include data about jobs at the upper end of the difficulty scale. In the Cleveland survey there was wide agreement among reporting firms on the comparability of the lowest ranking casework job, and this fact provided a sound basis for salary comparisons at the bottom end of

the scale. There the difference between social work salaries and industrial job rates was only 2 percent.

As the casework jobs become more complex and require more professional skills, the problem of locating and verifying comparable industrial jobs becomes more difficult. Fewer companies were found in this first year of the survey which could identify corresponding jobs, and few comparable jobs per company were reported. For instance, at the Caseworker *E* level, which was analyzed normally to require eight to ten years of casework experience beyond the master's degree, salaries of seventeen incumbents on comparable industrial jobs were reported; there were forty-five Caseworker *E*'s in member agencies.

It is therefore believed that while social work salaries at the lower end of the difficulty scale likely will continue in the future to be compared with salaries for the same or similar industrial jobs reported in the 1956 survey, comparisons between higher rated positions are not so firmly pegged. The industrial jobs and attendant salary rates chosen for comparison with advanced social work positions are the most similar of any discovered to date. Only greater experience, gained through several years of repeated surveys, will reveal the degree of accuracy attained in this pioneer attempt to make sound comparisons.

The recommended salary structure growing out of the Cleveland job evaluation project recognized the realities of the local situation. It would be amiss, however, not to report the suggested rate range of the core professional social work job—the job titled Caseworker *C* which, in briefest summary, was analyzed to require completion of two years study in an accredited school of social work plus up to one year of casework experience. The recommended range was \$385 to \$520 per month, a spread of 35 percent, with five merit increments from minimum to maximum of \$27 per month, or 7 percent each. In the Cleveland situation as guidance for member agency budget considerations in 1957, the salary structure of which this example is part was conservatively realistic while fully cognizant of community industrial practice.

Equally important recommendations of the study were several. For member agencies two were:

1. Develop standards of satisfactory performance for each job and procedures for periodic review of worker performance.
2. Base salary adjustments on merit and reserve approximately the top half of the rate range for any job for exceptional performance.

For the Case Work Council two were:

1. Periodically review the content and rating of jobs already evaluated in order that all necessary revisions may be made and related both to local industry and to progress in personnel administration within agencies.
2. Extend the evaluation process to all other classes of jobs within member agencies.

For the Welfare Federation two were:

1. Refer the report of the job evaluation project to other councils for their consideration of the advisability of applying such a systematic analysis and evaluation to positions in their respective fields.
2. Establish central personnel services to facilitate the continual review of the steps and conclusions of this job evaluation project and to provide consultation, coordination of committee functions, and related personnel services as requested by member agencies in all councils.

Does the Cleveland study have application in another community situation? Yes, but . . .

As the recital of Cleveland experience suggests, effective job evaluation is custom-made, so to speak. It should obtain a sense of participation from those whose jobs are under analysis, and, more important, the jobs should be evaluated in terms of factors which are agreed to be inclusive and significant to the specific classes of jobs being evaluated. That is to say, the Cleveland study job descriptions for caseworkers and the rating scale used offer suggestions as to form, content, and language for the guidance of other projects. However, it would be unwise and hazardous to presume that either or both could be used in another situation without carefully studied adaptation.

Be a leader in adopting and adapting systematic personnel administration techniques, including job evaluation and salary surveys, to the social welfare field. Recruit the skill, experience, and interest of competent personnel men from the community to assist and direct such agency and council undertakings. Seek the encouragement and support of top industrial management in the community for the projects. In the paraphrase of a recommendation to the Welfare Federation of Cleveland, however, do not attempt to have more than one job evaluation plan for jobs of the same category in an agency, a council, or a federation. Those industrial concerns which have tried to live with two or three or half a dozen job evaluation programs have found the experience frustrating, to say the least.

As for salary levels themselves, agencies in other communities have a direct link to results of the Cleveland job evaluation project. The Family Service Association of America has for years reported salaries for caseworkers in member agencies in ten major cities, among other personnel information. It is widely used as a guide in setting social work salaries. Its latest findings were summarized and published in the Cleveland salary survey. This traditional comparison consequently supplies a point of reference to the Cleveland job study which developed an answer to the question: "What is an attractive, competitive salary for a social worker?"

Administrative Use of Cost Data

I. COST ANALYSIS IN THE FAMILY SERVICE FIELD

by RALPH ORMSBY

COST ACCOUNTING ORIGINALLY grew out of the needs of industrialists and manufacturers who were concerned with pricing problems, control of production, and elimination of inefficiency and waste in materials and labor, rather than as an invention of bookkeepers and accountants. The development of cost analysis methods in social work arises from the need to know more about the details and the sum total of the operations of a social agency. Cost analysis in social work attempts to compute costs of services rather than the costs of material, tangible goods.

47 This paper is based on cost analyses conducted by three family service agencies, the Family Service of Philadelphia, the Family Service Association of Cleveland, and the Jewish Family Service of Philadelphia. These agencies used the cost study method which was presented in a manual, *Cost Analysis Method for Casework Agencies*, made available to the field in November, 1953. In addition, the method and initial results of the cost study conducted in Family Service of Philadelphia have been described in various papers.¹

The cost method followed in the three family agencies utilized the following cost accounting principles:

¹ John G. Hill and Ralph Ormsby, "The Value of Cost Analysis to the Family Field," *Social Casework*, XXXIII (1952), 330-37; Hill and Ormsby, "The Philadelphia Time-Cost Study: I. Methods and Findings [Hill]; II. Implications for Planning and Practice [Ormsby]," in *The Social Welfare Forum*, 1953 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953), pp. 205-18; Hill and Ormsby, "The Philadelphia Cost Study," *Social Work Journal*, XXXIV (1953), 165-68; John G. Hill, "Can Cost Accounting Help Social Agencies?" *The Child*, XVIII (1953), 43-45.

1. Cost accounting must agree with the general accounts. All operating expenses for a full fiscal year were accounted for by charging them to one or more of the different items for which costs were computed. Relief expenditures and the value of students' work were the only exclusions. (17)

2. The operations of the agency must be divided into the parts for which the costs are to be computed. These parts, known as "cost centers," must include all the operations and different functions of the organization. The cost centers were further differentiated as to their representation of "production" activities, which were regarded as end products, or "service" activities which were performed to enable the production of end products. Each cost center was broken down into detailed items. For example, the casework cost center was itemized by activities such as: in-person interviews with clients, telephone client interviews, collateral interviews, supervision, case recording, case conferences, case consultations, statistics, and case assignment routines.

3. Each cost should be allocated as completely as possible directly to a specific cost center.

4. A feature of the method used by the three agencies was that the time distribution of staff members according to cost centers was studied by a random sampling of the time for each person for the entire fiscal year. This detailed time study made possible the distribution of staff salaries among the various cost centers with considerable precision.

5. In the final tabulations, service costs were prorated among the production costs according to the distribution of the production costs. From the resulting full production costs, various unit costs were then computed.

The cost study in Family Service of Philadelphia was conducted in 1951-52; the Cleveland agency study was made in 1954; that of the Jewish Family Service of Philadelphia, in 1956. The difference in time of the three studies should be kept in mind in considering the data. Family Service of Philadelphia and the Family Service Association of Cleveland have used their original cost studies and later fiscal and statistical data to estimate their costs in following years.

Table 1 shows the distribution of agency expenditures in the three agencies among production and service cost centers. The outstanding fact about the data in this table is the high degree of similarity in the cost distribution of agency expenditures. The proportional distribution in each agency of production costs is extremely close, one to another. The percent of total expenditures devoted to the production costs of casework in Family Service of Philadelphia and the Family Service Association of Cleveland in the two studies are identical within one tenth of one percent. Furthermore, the percent of total expenditures represented by the cost of casework in Jewish Family Service of Philadelphia is only slightly lower than in the other two agencies.

TABLE 1
*Percentage Distribution of Expenditures in Three Family Agencies
among Production and Service Cost Centers*

	<i>F.S. of Philadelphia 1951-52</i>	<i>F.S.A. of Cleveland 1954</i>	<i>J.F.S. of Philadelphia 1956</i>
Cost centers: Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Production cost centers	64.1	66.8	65.3
Casework	53.9	53.8	52.8
Homemaker service		2.7	6.0
Group education	3.4	1.4	0.8
Community activities	3.6	4.9	3.2
Professional education	3.2	4.0	2.5
Service cost centers	35.9	33.2	34.7
Staff development	9.9	6.3	5.9
Public relations	4.8	4.2	4.0
Research	3.5	3.9	2.0
General administration	17.7	18.8	22.8

The total service cost distributions are also similar in the three agencies. The distribution of expenditures among the various service cost centers shows some variation; for example, the proportion of service cost expenditures for staff development ranges from 5.9 percent to 9.9 percent. A more detailed examination of the general administration item also shows variations.

The service costs, as has been stated, represent the activities supportive of, and enabling to, production activities. The service

costs, by this definition, compose the administrative activities of the agency. These administrative costs may appear to represent a large part of total costs. However, it must be noted that the family service agency endeavors to provide a high quality of end-product services. Further experience in administering family agency programs—now that cost analysis provides us with precise, comprehensive, and detailed data—may indicate ways in which to effect reduction in service costs; yet maintenance of high-quality production activities may well require that from 30 percent to 35 percent of expenditures be devoted to staff development, personnel administration, public relations, and other administrative costs.

In all three agencies the bulk of expenditures was for salaries: 82.2 percent in Family Service of Philadelphia; 84.4 percent in the Family Service Association of Cleveland; and 85.1 percent in Jewish Family Service of Philadelphia.

The distribution of agency expenditures among production centers when service costs are prorated among the production costs is shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Percentage Distribution of Agency Expenditures in Three Family Service Agencies among Production Centers, Including Share of Service Costs

	<i>F.S. of Philadelphia 1951-52</i>	<i>F.S.A. of Cleveland 1954</i>	<i>J.F.S. of Philadelphia 1956</i>
Production cost centers: Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Casework	84.5	81.3	81.4
Homemaker service		4.0	9.1
Group education	5.4	2.1	1.3
Community activities	5.7	7.4	4.9
Professional education	4.4	5.2	3.3

The total expenditures for casework service, the major production activity of the three agencies, were: Family Service of Philadelphia \$235,733; Family Service Association of Cleveland \$389,258; Jewish Family Service of Philadelphia \$165,426.

The similarity of the data in Tables 1 and 2 is further confirmed in Table 3. Our explanation of the high degree of sameness in the data of the three agencies is that the agencies have

similar standards; the programs are characteristic of agencies belonging to the common field of family service which has developed a strong unity of purpose through its national membership association, and the agencies have progressed similarly in their historical development. However, it must be stated that without the application of the cost analysis instrument, this degree of sameness could not have been determined. As more agencies in this field conduct cost studies, differences in their cost distribution can be easily identified, and comparison should then be made with the methods and standards applying to the particular activities which show deviations from the pattern of these three "agreeing" agencies.

TABLE 3

Percentage Distribution of Casework Costs in Three Family Service Agencies among Interviewing and Other Casework Costs

	<i>F.S. of Philadelphia 1951-52</i>	<i>F.S.A. of Cleveland 1954</i>	<i>J.F.S. of Philadelphia 1956</i>
Total costs	100.0	100.0	100.0
Interview costs	42.5	43.3	40.2
In-person interviews	33.8	34.4	30.7
Telephone interviews	8.7	6.6	7.9
Obtaining initial data		2.3	1.6
Other casework costs	57.5	56.7	59.8
Dictating case records	28.2	31.3	28.2
Miscellaneous dictating and record keeping	3.9	6.1	4.7
Supervisory conferences	13.1	9.1	6.7
Case consultations	5.8	1.4	3.8
Case conferences	1.2	1.4	4.3
Case assignment routines	2.4	1.7	1.4
Miscellaneous	2.9	5.7	10.7

The cost analysis data from the Cleveland and Jewish Family Service of Philadelphia studies confirm the Family Service of Philadelphia finding in 1951-52 that other casework costs exceed the cost of time spent in interviewing clients. Also, the two later studies point out that the most time- and cost-consuming casework

activities outside interviewing are dictation and supervisory conferences.

Although the total percent distribution of other casework costs is quite close among the three agencies, differences in the breakdown of the total costs may be noted. For example, the percent of cost devoted to case consultation ranges from 1.4 to 5.8 percent, the range for supervisory conference costs is 6.7 to 13.1 percent, and the cost of miscellaneous casework activities is from 2.9 to 10.7 percent.

I am certain that in the four years since our initial cost study was made, the Family Service of Philadelphia has reduced dictation, supervisory conference, and consultation costs, thereby providing more professional staff time for interviewing. The exact redistribution we have been able to effect of course cannot be known until we repeat the cost study. I am certain, however, that fundamental and meaningful change of other casework costs is not a simple matter and involves dealing with traditional methods and patterns of the field of social and family casework as well as re-planning individual agency activities.

We come now to the intriguing matter of unit costs. Since casework is the major activity and cost of the family service agency, I shall discuss only the unit cost of casework. The unit cost relates the costs of production to the volume of production. When the initial results of the Philadelphia study were presented in 1953 to the National Conference of Social Work, Dr. Hill discussed the relative merits of different cost units of casework. Among his suggestions for units were the interview, the cost per hour of interviewing time, and the case. Dr. Hill stated that "it appears that the most satisfactory solution [to this problem of selecting a unit] lies in computing the unit costs of casework in several different ways, depending on the uses to which the results are likely to be put."²

Table 4 gives unit costs per in-person interview, using actual and estimated costs of casework. The estimated costs of casework in Family Service of Philadelphia and the Family Service Association of Cleveland for the years following their original cost

² Hill, *Social Welfare Forum*, 1953, p. 218.

studies were computed similarly. The total agency expenditures in the years in which unit costs were estimated were as comparable to the original study data as possible. This was accomplished by adding to the known expenditures the estimated rental value of owned buildings and charges for the estimated value of overtime and subtracting financial aid and retirement payments to former employees. The original study figures for the percent of the total expenditures devoted to casework (84.5 percent for Family Service of Philadelphia and 81.3 percent for the Family Service Association of Cleveland) were then used to arrive at the cost of casework. The actual statistical data on cases and case activity were then used to calculate unit costs.

TABLE 4
*Unit Costs per In-person Interview in Three
Family Service Agencies*

	<i>F.S. of Philadelphia</i>	<i>F.S.A. of Cleveland</i>	<i>J.F.S. of Philadelphia</i>
1951-52	\$23.94		
1952-53	19.28 (est.)		
1953-54	17.42 (est.)		
1954		\$18.41	
1954-55	21.24 (est.)		
1955		16.00 (est.)	
1955-56	20.88 (est.)		
1956		17.86 (est.)	\$18.87

In considering the above costs it should be noted that the length of the average in-person interview was 50.6 minutes in the original Family Service of Philadelphia study, 56 minutes in the Cleveland original study, and 59.5 minutes in the Jewish Family Service of Philadelphia study. Obviously, the length of an interview markedly affects its cost, and comparison between the "study" agencies and other agencies should be made with this factor in mind.

While there may be different reactions to the actual costs shown in Table 4, it should be emphasized that the three agencies, like all others, have been operating in a period of rapidly rising costs. To have held unit costs steady and to have even shown some reduction in unit costs during a sharply rising cost period is, we believe, to demonstrate important progress in management of

costs. For example, in the three agencies, the largest single cost is for professional salaries, and from 1952 to 1956 the base pay of caseworkers has gone up at least 20 percent.

I should like to comment also on the changing costs from year to year, although we can show only a brief span of years in data presented in Table 4. Cost figures for particular years are greatly influenced by the flow of intake and the staff available to work on the cases at hand. When there is an overload of work, staff have full case loads and are pressed to achieve full interview production, but if applications are down, production tends to lag. Furthermore, staff positions cannot be readily reduced or increased to coincide with fluctuations in the demand for service. Another variable, over which there is no administrative control but which greatly affects production, is that bugbear of all agencies, staff turnover. A sizable turnover in staff results in decreased production during and after the replacement period.

In the 1953 presentation of the Family Service of Philadelphia study Dr. Hill commented on the limitations inherent in the in-person interview unit for casework cost, pointing out that some in-person interviews are with collateral persons other than the client, and that many client interviews are conducted by telephone interviewing. Table 5, therefore, is shown to present another unit cost for casework.

TABLE 5
*Unit Cost per Active Case per Month
in Three Family Service Agencies*

	<i>F.S. of Philadelphia</i>	<i>F.S.A. of Cleveland</i>	<i>J.F.S. of Philadelphia</i>
1951-52	\$29.54		
1952-53	27.50 (est.)		
1953-54	25.42 (est.)		
1954		\$32.60	
1954-55	27.91 (est.)		
1955		30.68 (est.)	
1955-56	26.71 (est.)		
1956		34.27 (est.)	\$28.90

The striking thing about Table 5 is that it shows a reverse relation in unit costs among the three agencies from Table 4. The

difference seems to exist in the nature of the case loads. To take the extremes, in 1954, 49 percent of the active cases of Family Service of Philadelphia were "brief service" cases and 34 percent of the active cases of Family Service Association of Cleveland were in this category.⁸ The brief service cases include more of the cases handled by telephone interview only. It would therefore seem that the Family Service of Philadelphia unit cost on the in-person interview basis bore the cost of more casework time spent on brief service cases handled by telephone interview only than the Cleveland interview unit.

(4) The problem, as I see it, in arriving at interview and case unit costs of casework is that, while we have developed in cost studies new ways of analyzing our financial data, we are deriving our case and case activity data from an outmoded statistical system. The "active" case represents anything from a case handled by only one telephone interview to one carried over a period of months with regular in-person interviews, and in-person collateral and telephone interviews in addition.

We have been using in Family Service of Philadelphia since June, 1956, a new statistical system which produces separate statistics on the applications processed and on the continued treatment cases. It seems to me that when we repeat the cost study, it will be meaningful to compute the cost on a "case" basis of the applications processed and on an "in-person interview" basis for the continued treatment case.

If this suggested statistical system were followed, I believe we would find that agencies would differ considerably in the amount of expenditures devoted to processing applications and the unit cost for these cases. I believe there are different community factors affecting the applications received by family agencies rather than difference in the casework method used in processing applications or difference in intake policy. Such factors as adequacy of public assistance, court and probation systems, and referral practices between children and family agencies differ according to communities.

⁸ William B. McCurdy, *Statistics of Family Casework, an Analysis of 1954 Data from 60 F.S.A.A. Member Agencies* (New York: Family Service Association of America, 1955).

On the other hand, separate statistics on a continued treatment group of cases should make possible more comparable unit costs, based on the in-person interview, among family service agencies. This is a group of cases in which the bulk of fee-paying occurs. The cost per interview would be helpful in determining fees to be charged and would represent more closely the cost of the service the client himself receives after eligibility and acceptance for agency service has been established. Another way to look at it is that the fee-paying client whose charge was based on the average interview cost per continued treatment service would not have his charge based on an amount including the cost of the agency screening and referring a large group of clients who never receive continued treatment service.

Cost data make an immediate impact on the way a particular agency conducts its business. Any agency making a cost study will obtain data which will suggest change in such matters as planning time spent in meetings, revising practices in case recording, and statistical procedures, planning supervisory conferences in relation to the worker's experience level and professional maturity, and setting agency expectation for interview production and staffing the agency accordingly.

The long-range impact of more cost data may prove to be of even greater significance than the immediate adjustments they stimulate. We have built up certain ways of doing things over a period of many years. Perhaps cost data will jar us into looking at new ways of performing our jobs without sacrificing the quality of service we have striven so hard to achieve.

II. COST ANALYSIS IN CHILD PLACEMENT AGENCIES¹

by LOIS WILDY

5
29
CHILD PLACEMENT AGENCIES are investigating methods of obtaining and using cost data. Two major studies have been completed: work measurement for performance budgeting,² undertaken by Edward Schwartz at the Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society under the sponsorship of the Elizabeth McCormick Memorial Fund of Chicago; and shortly thereafter the study of costs of the Pleasantville Cottage School, one of the institutions maintained by the Jewish Child Care Association of New York. The second study³ was conducted by Martin Wolins under the sponsorship of the Child Welfare League of America and the United States Children's Bureau. Preliminary reports of the methodology and findings have already been made, and I understand that both studies are to be published in the near future. However, there has not been sufficient time to make full use of the methods or of the data produced by these two studies.

This paper is a progress report. As such it will deal with some of the principles and assumptions underlying current efforts to establish accounting methods; it will provide a brief description of the systems the Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society has been employing in deriving measurements of work and costs and, finally, it will include suggestions as to some of the ways these data may be useful.

¹ Grateful acknowledgment is made to Elizabeth Meek, Director of the Downstate Division, and to George Akehurst, Controller, Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society, for their able assistance in the preparation of this report.

² Edward E. Schwartz, "Work Measurement for Performance Budgeting in a Child-placing Agency" (unpublished interim report, 1955).

³ Martin Wolins, "Care and Cost in an Institution for Children," *Child Welfare*, XXXVI (1957), 8-13.

Administrators in social agencies have many and varied responsibilities which require comprehensive knowledge and multiple tools. Those responsibilities particularly related to management, such as the provision of services to meet the urgent needs of the community, the use of resources—manpower and funds—and the evaluation of the output—the work done—require, first, a sound organizational structure and then tools of measurement, the more precise the better. The instruments whereby work can be measured, counts made, and funds accounted for, can be effective only to the extent that the organization provides administrative units which have well-defined managerial responsibility and authority.

The organizational structure of agencies will vary in accordance with many factors and circumstances, but there are some basic principles which govern effective management.⁴

Organization of administrative units within an agency must be for a purpose, the performance of a defined part of the total agency program. Organization is not an end in itself but a means to the end of attaining the agency's objectives. Each unit, whether it is a department, a division, or a district office, should have a defined purpose and defined responsibilities under the management of a designated person. The aim is to have as many autonomous units as possible, but obviously a unit cannot be too small, and therefore some will be organized by necessity on a functional basis serving or being dependent upon other units. Autonomy does not mean independence. Decentralization of administrative responsibilities produces the structure of team management whereby each member of the team is directed by agreed-upon objectives, and the central administration or top management makes the decisions that affect the welfare of the whole agency and its long-range plans and goals. It is assumed that all units have a common philosophy and a unity of purpose, and that practices and procedures which directly affect other units are uniform.

Each administrator of a unit requires the tools whereby he can plan programs, determine intake policies and priorities. The basic resource of an agency is its manpower. To determine the most

⁴ Peter F. Drucker, *The Practice of Management* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1954).

effective use of this resource the administrator needs reliable data as to the jobs to be done and the number of people needed and available. Evaluation of the performance of the units, the work done, requires measurement in terms of volume and costs. For these purposes, the methods of accounting for work under way or completed and for use of funds not only must produce reliable data but must be appropriate for the purposes to which they are to be applied. Agencies vary in size, in function, in types of services rendered, and hence accounting methods should be designed to meet their individual needs. Even with these variations, some uniform data can be obtained which will provide basis for valid comparisons, for setting standards, and for making possible united, coordinated efforts toward meeting community needs.

Methods of accounting should produce data which the agency needs and can use in its operations and planning. They should also produce the data needed by agencies or organizations, such as community chests or public agencies purchasing care. Accounting methods should be as economical as possible in use of time and as simple as the case permits.

The Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society is a large, privately supported child placement agency rendering three services: foster family care, long-time rather than temporary; adoption; and residential treatment for emotionally disturbed children. Its headquarters are in Chicago, and approximately 80 percent of its services are rendered to children from the metropolitan Chicago area. It also maintains branch offices through which adoption and some foster family services are provided. Obviously, in its size, its program, its structure, and in its affiliation with the Chicago Community Fund, the Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society differs from any other agency, and therefore the methods of accounting which I shall describe were designed for it and cannot *ipso facto* be applied elsewhere.

Cost accounting.—We are now using a combination of performance reporting and program budgeting. With the services of our accounting firm, we have established a cost accounting method directly related to the administrative structure of the agency. That structure consists of four independent child-caring divisions: the

Foster Care Division, the Adoption Division, the Downstate Division, and the Children's Home, each with an administrative head.

Supplementary to these, and each serving more than one of these four divisions, are the auxiliary departments: Homefinding, Intake, the Medical Clinic, and the executive-clerical unit. The Public Relations Department is also a distinct administrative unit. In other words, the agency's structure includes a number of distinct and clearly defined administrative units.

Our cost accounting method is based on a general ledger cost system which produces expense figures on an accrual basis for each of the administrative units. Therefore, the cost centers are related to the administrative centers rather than to the activities of the staff or other functions.

An analysis of the services rendered by the four divisions revealed that these fell into two categories: the physical maintenance of children and casework services. The maintenance costs are payments made to foster parents; payments made to institutions from which we are buying care; payments for clothing; allowances; school supplies; school transportation; payments to dentists and for medicine and drugs used by the children. These costs are immediately identifiable with individual children.

The service costs are staff salaries and associated expenses of casework services, such as office accommodations, clerical staff, transportation, administration, and miscellaneous. The expenses of maintaining children are charged to the proper child-caring divisions as direct expense. Likewise, those casework service costs incurred under the direct control of the directors of the child-caring divisions are accounted as direct expense of those divisions. Those service costs incurred under the direct control of the heads of the auxiliary departments and accounted as direct expense of those departments are allocated to the child-caring divisions as indirect cost in accordance with sound accounting principles.

Having thus determined the total expenditures for each of the four divisions, we have the price of the product of each. This price includes the average service costs of each division plus the actual maintenance costs for each unit. For various reasons, such as pre-

paring a budget for the Chicago Community Fund, which limits its allocation to Chicago children, reporting to local welfare councils, or to the State Department of Public Welfare, we must count children and state costs of services to children from a particular geographical area. Therefore, every statistical count and every dollar expenditure is accounted for in two ways. Having established the average cost of the administrative unit which is responsible for the care and supervision of a group of children, we can ascertain the cost of one or more children who are in that administrative unit.

(36) No mention has been made of the method used in charging the costs of the Public Relations Department. The chief function of this department is to raise funds for the agency's current operating expenses. In Chicago each agency is expected to raise through its own efforts as much as it possibly can. The Chicago Community Fund helps its member agencies meet the deficit in its contribution item. Raising funds through its own efforts and talents is a responsibility and a privilege few agencies outside Chicago enjoy, and therefore the principle of allocating the cost of fund raising would not apply to many agencies. The cost of our public relations department is regarded as a burden on income and therefore added to the expenditures proportionately to the amounts of contributions received from the two areas: Chicago and downstate.

In accordance with these principles and procedures the agency budget consists of: (1) a statement of expenditures by objective line items for each administrative unit; (2) a consolidation of the total expenditure items for the four divisions, which is arrived at by allocating to each its proportionate share of the other administrative units which serve more than one division. The total expenditures for the four divisions equal the total agency expenditures.

This format of the budget presents the actual cost by program and the average cost per production unit of each program. The production units we are now using are: placement of children in adoption homes for the adoption program; and months of care for the Foster Care Division and the Children's Home.

Since there is an objective item statement for each administrative unit, it is possible to comply with the requests of various community chests to submit budgets on their regulation forms. When we have done this we have attached to the forms the budget presenting the program.

Statistical accounting.—All the counts we make of children, adoption homes, and foster homes are uniform in the agency and are compiled by the administrative units of the agency and by residence. Such counts are the customary ones used by child-placing agencies.

However, the work measurement study which we undertook produced an additional set of counts. The method designed by Mr. Schwartz provided defined units or phases of the total case-work process. These are called "work units" and include such items as intake request, intake study, foster home screening, foster home study, placement process, supervision of child in foster home, and so forth. These were defined as work units because they represent units of work in process or completed for a specific purpose.

With these counts we have an additional dimension as an administrative tool. For example, the ratio of one work unit to another provides a basis for planning work loads and for budgeting. How many pre-adoption boarding homes will the Downstate Division need next year? Having estimated that sixty babies will be cared for by the division during the year, knowing that the average length of stay in a pre-adoption boarding home is four months, we will need $60 \times 4 = 240$ months of boarding care during the year, or an average of twenty boarding homes per month. But also knowing that one must be prepared for the fact that some boarding homes will not be available as needed, we must procure an additional number. This number is determined on the basis of the past statistical data and the judgment of the staff.

If the need is greater than the number now in use, plans must be made to find and study the additional homes. Knowing the ratio of infant boarding home applicants to homes approved, we know what needs to be done in recruiting applicants and the timing of such recruitment efforts. Knowing the mean time for screen-

ing and study of these homes, we can plan for the work load of one or more workers to allow for the completion of this task.

One of the outgrowths of the work measurement study in our agency was the establishment of a method of accounting for casework time spent in travel and in-person interviews. By this time-accounting method we are collecting data which will be useful in determining norms or standards for these two activities.

Furthermore, analysis of travel and interview counts reveals the proportion of time spent by a caseworker or all the caseworkers in a division on various work units, as, for example: in the Adoption Division the time spent in the study of adoption homes, in the supervision of a child in a pre-adoption boarding home or in an adoption home. We do not know what such ratios should be, but we are analyzing what we are now doing. Analysis of these data over a sufficient length of time may reveal valuable information in planning and in work load management.

In the Foster Care Division, analysis of counts of interview and travel time shows wide distribution among the children under care. Some children and their foster parents or own parents are receiving much more time than others. By further analysis of these data we should be able to identify common characteristics of the children, grouped in categories of expenditures of time and travel by casework staff, in order to obtain relevant information for work load assignment as well as for predicting costs.

In brief, by adding work units or performance reporting to our statistical accounting we are attempting to determine quantitative norms in relation to specific work assignments. We are searching for better methods in the management of casework time and we are coordinating our statistical and cost data in a more meaningful way.

In all this discussion it is implied that we are maintaining and improving the quality of our services to clients and to the community; that we regard sound accounting methods as a means toward that end.

In summary, we have established a cost accounting system based first on administrative units and coincidentally upon distinct services or programs. We have a statistical accounting method

based on a combination of program and performance reporting. We have cost data integrated with production units. These have been designed to meet the needs of our agency in relation to its functions, services, and administrative structure.

We have not yet fully explored the potential uses that can be made of the data we now have. However, some of the possibilities can readily be seen:

We can now price the product. We know the average cost per month of care of a child in a foster home and in the Children's Home. We know the average cost of an adoption placement. We can estimate these costs in advance.

We have information which identifies the extent of financial responsibility of those for whom services are rendered, such as parents, public agencies purchasing service; of those who assume responsibility for a part or the total expenditures of the agency, such as the Chicago Community Fund, the downstate community chests.

We have a more realistic approach to budgeting. The budgeting process, based on the full use of objective data, becomes a series of interrelated decisions and judgments which take into consideration many factors. The initial step in our budgeting process is to review the current work loads of the professional staff and their records of past production. With the knowledge of individual circumstances, of planned changes in policy and program, and of subsequent procedures, we can establish a projected case load of each of the divisions and then for the total agency. By this method we set for ourselves a realistic goal rather than one arrived at by wishful thinking.

The administrative staff now have objective data as to the production of their staff which they can use in planning, in work assignments, and in evaluation. The monthly reports showing expenditures compared to the budget for the division provide information they need in order to manage and control expenditures and to determine intake.

We now have the kind of information which makes it possible for the board to make decisions on policy and program at the appropriate time.

Recently, the board of one of our district offices, in preparing next year's budget for the operations of that office, was confronted with a major policy decision as to how the agency could best use its resources. For approximately the same amount of money, that district office could accept twenty-six infants for adoption services over the next six-year period, or it could accept four children requiring foster family care throughout the same period (six years, which is the average length of time a child remains in foster care in our agency). Knowing the costs freed the board to give careful consideration to the community needs, to weigh the pros and cons, and to make a decision. It is our intention to utilize to the fullest extent the opportunities and the methods by which the trustees can evaluate the program and make policy decisions.

It is now possible for the staff and the board to view each program and in doing so to scrutinize the internal relationships of specific procedures translated into numbers, such as the ratio of foster home studies to new children accepted, or the ratio of travel time to interview time, and the output of the program in terms of unit cost. It is also possible to see the relationships between the different programs and how they are or should be coordinated to strengthen the services of the agency.

There are many possibilities in the use of these data which would be helpful to the staff. In no way do I wish to imply that administration should burden the staff with its problems and its responsibilities, but staff members have a right and need to know agency expectations. The projected case load for a division becomes its goal. Staff members have a right to know what the goal or goals are, and on what basis they were determined. When breakdowns occur, such as loss of staff and resultant closing of intake, the staff can work more effectively and purposefully when they know why this action was necessary.

We now have an aid in communication which may be useful. By reducing the services of the agency to numerical concepts and relationships, we can communicate more easily and effectively with businessmen who think and work with such concepts. Businessmen who serve on boards and budget committees have made a valiant effort to understand the work and language of social

work. We need to make an even greater effort than they to bridge the gap in understanding. It may be that data produced through various accounting methods and reduced to numbers may aid in our communications.

There are many other avenues which call for exploration. For example, children's institutions present a different set of problems. Mr. Wolins's study, you will recall, suggests a number of lines of investigation, such as relation of cost to characteristics of children, to sources of referrals, to securing medical services, and so on. Both work measurement studies raise questions regarding the most effective use of manpower; the proportionate amount of time necessary for staff meetings, for dictation, for staff training; the proportion of clerical staff to professional staff; the proportion of child care staff to children. Both agencies now have an approach to obtaining meaningful cost data; it will require time to develop their full usefulness and to make adaptations and refinements.

What are the results of our work? How good is the product? Answers to these questions are still in the future, but given a method whereby historical objective data can be obtained which will reflect policy decisions, which will identify procedures and resources used or not used, and which can be tabulated to show meaningful relationships and costs, we may have the framework for a realistic evaluation of our results.

Our experience suggests that given an organizational structure which defines responsibility and authority, a valid, sound, and reliable cost accounting system is the first step in deriving meaningful cost data. Such a system can be set up for any agency by its auditing firm with little or no additional expense. This is a service which most of us require from an outside source, just as we engage the services of psychiatrists, psychologists, medical personnel. Perhaps in the future the principles of cost accounting will be included in courses offered by schools of social work.

Obviously, caution must be exercised in comparing cost data, as for example, from one agency to another. Comparisons are useful and valid only if the data are comparable. Therefore, great caution should be used in drawing conclusions. There is danger that once a figure is derived it becomes a fact and thereby not subject

to change. But figures do and must change, and there are various methods which can be employed to register change.

It has been suggested that publicizing cost data is dangerous to the well-being of the agency's program, that the board of the agency or the contributing public are not ready for these shocking revelations. Discretion in the use of any information is certainly desirable, but magic, myths, and ignorance will not speed us toward our common goal of engaging the interests, talents, and resources of the citizens of this country in the welfare of those in need.

Having cost data in hand will not solve all our administrative problems. A cost accounting plan is only one of many tools which we are developing to enable us to fulfill administrative responsibilities more effectively. It can never be a substitute for any of the other resources, talents, and techniques which are required to discharge responsibilities and fulfill our objectives.

ta
us
to
ne
ng
ly
to-
re-
in

ve
ch
isi-
of
to